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JESUS AND THE GREEKS

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# JESUS AND THE GREEKS

OR

EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN THE  
TIDEWAY OF HELLENISM

BY

WILLIAM FAIRWEATHER

M.A., D D (EDIN.)

KIRKCALDY

Ἦσαν δέ τινες Ἑλληνες . . . οὗτοι οὖν  
προσῆλθον Φιλίππῳ . . . καὶ ἡρώτων  
αὐτὸν λέγοντες, “Κύριε, θέλομεν τὸν  
Ἰησοῦν ἰδεῖν.”—JOHN xii. 20-21.

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## PREFACE

IN rabbinical circles, prior to the Christian era, all who were not "Jews" were placed in the category of "Greeks," Judaism being regarded as the only true religion, and all other religions as false. So, too, in later times, and in Christian circles, the relations between Christianity and other religions were conceived as distinctly hostile, the non-Christian faiths of the world being viewed as utterly devoid of truth or merit. Thus the good Dean Prideaux could still speak of Zoroaster as "this famous impostor," and says of him and of Mahomet, "Both of them were very crafty knaves." And in general no milder epithets were applied to Buddha and Confucius. All alike were put under the ban as deceivers and apostles of error. This standpoint has been practically abandoned. Not only so, but there is now a marked tendency in the opposite direction. The comparative study of religions has led to widespread recognition of elements of good in all religions, but just on this very account it becomes the more necessary to emphasize the essential independence of Christianity, which, under the new conditions, is apt to be erroneously considered as a mere incident in the progress of moral evolution.



Nothing can be more certain than that Christianity is lineally descended from the religion of the Old Testament. But was this its only source? Must we not attribute to it a mixed ancestry? With the increased attention given to comparative religion, it was inevitable that the question should be raised, and some scholars have not hesitated to answer it in the affirmative. In their view Christianity is largely a syncretistic product of the age in which it arose—"a congeries, a hotch-potch of the leavings and scraps and broken meat of the great peoples of the East and West."<sup>1</sup> Thus Pfeleiderer, for instance, roundly asserts that "Jewish prophecy, rabbinical teaching, Oriental gnosis, and Greek philosophy had already mingled their colours upon the palette from which the portrait of Christ in the New Testament Scriptures was painted."<sup>2</sup> Among the non-Jewish influences to which we are pointed as furnishing material for Christianity, the Egyptian, Assyro-Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic are to be reckoned as the chief.

The following pages represent an attempt to exhibit, however inadequately, the relation of Christianity to Hellenism, with a view to reaching a definite conclusion concerning *one* main part of the question at issue. Briefly, the result arrived at is that while upon a dispassionate review of the situation the fact of Hellenistic influence upon primitive Christianity cannot be disputed, that influence is much more limited in extent than is frequently

<sup>1</sup> Newman, *Callista*, p. 275.

<sup>2</sup> *The Early Christian Conception of Christ*, Introd., p. 9.

alleged, and in no way vitally affects the substance, or detracts from the essential independence, of "the faith which has been once for all committed to the saints." Certain alleged doctrinal resemblances between the Hellenistic and Christian religions are found, when closely examined, to amount to nothing more than similarity in point of intellectual structure. In this respect Christianity was indeed strongly influenced by Hellenism; but although, particularly in the speculative constructions of St. Paul, Christianity made use of Hellenistic categories of thought, it owed nothing of its essential content to the religion of the Greeks. That no one understood this better than the Apostle himself is evident from his own words: "Jews demand miracles and Greeks want wisdom, but our message is Christ the crucified—a stumbling-block to the Jews, 'sheer folly' to the Gentiles, but for those who are called, whether Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power of God and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. I<sup>22-24</sup>).

The plan of the book will be sufficiently obvious from a glance at the Table of Contents. Part I. deals with the world-wide diffusion of Hellenistic culture during and after the time of Alexander the Great; Part II. with the representative Jewish Hellenist Philo of Alexandria; and Part III. with the relation of Hellenism to early Christianity and the New Testament. Readers who are content with a general view of the subject may prefer to skip Part II., and (with Bousset) to regard Jewish-Alexandrian Hellenism as an isolated pheno-

menon ; but I have thought it advisable to include this special aspect of our theme, not only for the sake of completeness, but also from a growing sense of the real importance of Philo for the history of religion. Professor H. A. A. Kennedy's recent work entitled *Philo's Contribution to Religion* has quickened this conviction in so many minds that the movement in which the remarkable Jewish Hellenist of Alexandria is the central figure can no longer well be treated as a mere side issue.

My thanks are due to the authorities of Chicago University for kind permission to make partial use of articles on "The Beatitudes" and "The Greek Apologists" which originally appeared in *The Biblical World*.

In quoting from the New Testament I have frequently availed myself of Dr. Moffatt's translation.

W. FAIRWEATHER.

KIRKCALDY, October 1924.

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PART I.

THE DIFFUSION OF HELLENISM.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

### *The Term Hellenism.*

WHAT was Hellenism? To give any precise definition here is difficult. The word has a history, and came to be used in different senses. At first it meant whatever is distinctive of the Greek people, with special reference to the use of their language. Thus a phrase in the peculiar idiom of the Greek language is designated a Hellenism, and one who adopts the speech, manners, and customs of the Greeks is similarly designated a Hellenist. So used, the term no longer points specially to racial descent, but rather to the possession of a certain spirit or bent of mind. Among the Jews Hellenism gradually became synonymous with heathenism, men being classed religiously as Jews and Greeks (2 Macc. 4<sup>36</sup>, Acts 18<sup>4</sup>, etc.). The "Hellenes" mentioned in John 12<sup>20</sup> were probably Gentile proselytes to Judaism.<sup>1</sup> In the early ages of Christianity the name Hellenist was specially applied

<sup>1</sup> Calvin and Ewald take them to be Greek-speaking Jews dwelling in Greek cities of Palestine. Meyer, however, asserts that "in the New Testament *Ἕλληνες* invariably means the *heathen*, Gentiles, not the Hellenists (*Ἑλληνισταί* = Grecian Jews); so even in John 12<sup>20</sup>." But in this passage he considers the reference to be to proselytes, not to *pure* Gentiles, and with this Neander, Westcott, and Thayer (*Lexicon*, *s.v.*) agree. According to Mahaffy, the allusion is to Greeks hitherto keeping aloof from Jewish religion; and if this were really so, it would of course add piquancy to the incident, but Meyer is probably right.

to a colonial or expatriated Jew who spoke the Greek language. In modern times, too, the epithet Hellenist is sometimes applied to a person skilled in that tongue.

Owing to this varying connotation, a certain confusion necessarily attaches to the use of the word Hellenism. In Grote's *History of Greece* it denotes the classic culture of Athens; in Droysen's *History of Hellenism* it is used in a narrower sense corresponding to the adjective Hellenistic. Mahaffy adheres to the latter usage: "By *Hellenism* I mean that so-called 'silver age' of Greek art and literature when they have become cosmopolitan and not parochial; and by *Hellenistic*, not only what *was* Greek, but what desired and assumed to be Greek, from the highest and noblest imitation down to the poorest travesty."<sup>1</sup> In such excellent works as E. Bevan's *The House of Seleucus*, and R. W. Livingstone's *The Greek Genius and its Meaning to us*, the term is employed in both senses indiscriminately, but this inevitably tends to vagueness and confusion. On the whole, it seems best to limit it to a specific meaning, and in the present volume it is accordingly employed in the narrower sense.

<sup>1</sup> *Progress of Hellenism in Alexander's Empire*, p. 4.



## CHAPTER I.

### FORERUNNERS OF HELLENISM: XENOPHON AND ISOCRATES.

#### *Cosmopolitanism of Xenophon.*

IT has been usual to associate the beginnings of Hellenism with the rise of Alexander's empire ; but Mahaffy is undoubtedly right in dating its origin from the moment of the decadence of Athens as the political and military capital of Greece, and in connecting " the first step in the transition from Hellenedom to Hellenism " with the main features in the life and teaching of Xenophon, pupil of Socrates, and eulogist of Cyrus. From the close of the Peloponnesian War it began to be recognized, not only among the numerous Greeks who found their way into adjacent countries in order to push their fortunes, but even among those who remained in Greece, that Isocrates was justified in his contention that the real title to be an Athenian was not to be a native of Athens, but to be the possessor of Attic culture. In both of these respects Xenophon was a genuine Greek, but through the educative influence of travel and contact with men of other nationalities he had made himself in some sense a citizen of the world. This is already evident in his language. Although his written style is that of idiomatic Attic prose, he occasionally makes use

of Hellenistic words current in outlying regions, and is much more sparing in the use of particles than the older classical authors in whose writings they convey such subtle shades of meaning. In fact he may almost be reckoned as the first writer of that "common" dialect which was soon to become the general vehicle of communication throughout the Hellenistic world. But his cosmopolitanism appears also in his ready appreciation of things foreign to the Greeks. From the Persians he learned the joys of hunting and a taste for landscape gardening. The sight of a Phœnician vessel in the harbour at Corinth led him to dilate upon it as a model of neatness and order. The "wisdom of Egypt" was known to him through mercenaries serving in the armies under his command. It had been his privilege to travel all over the Eastern world—in Asia Minor, in Armenia, in Babylonia—and this necessarily widened his horizon, broadened his sympathies, and gave him a knowledge of men and of things not obtainable from the highest Athenian culture. Through his love of adventure and his sporting proclivities Xenophon thus gained an experience which lends value to the impressions conveyed in his writings regarding the Greek world of his day and the future in store for it.

*Xenophon's Colonizing Instinct.*

Chief among these impressions Mahaffy reckons "his firm belief in the expansion of the Hellenic race." Like the modern Briton, the ancient Greek had a talent for colonizing, and Xenophon's travels seem to have whetted his zeal in this respect. When after the battle of Cunaxa the Persian satrap Tissaphernes had deprived

of their officers the ten thousand Greeks who had joined the expedition of the younger Cyrus against his brother Artaxerxes II., and Xenophon was called to assume the direction of the retreat to the shores of the Black Sea, the army with difficulty prevented him from forming them into a new Greek colony in that region. That abundant facilities were offered to Greek colonists at that time is clear from the invitation given to Xenophon and his men to settle in Thrace, where they had rendered temporary service to Seuthes, its king. Similar opportunities would naturally present themselves elsewhere to enterprising Greek traders and soldiers, and the "barbarian" world would begin to assume a new complexion. Amid the military movements of the time, particularly in Persia and in Asia Minor, where the Spartan king Agesilaus, so admired of Xenophon, was an active belligerent, men of different countries were being drawn closer together. The fiery ordeal of war had begun to fuse down the discordant, antagonistic elements that had hitherto kept races apart.

But for their miserable internal squabbles the Greeks might at this epoch have made themselves masters of the East. Xenophon seems to have had an acute perception that in the absence of union and of a competent leader no such prize could be won. As a disciple of Socrates he had probably never been favourable to democracy, but after his master had fallen an innocent victim to the miserable prejudices of an Athenian jury, he must have lost faith in it completely. In other cities the democratic control was certainly not more, and probably less, intelligent than at Athens, and from the decision of a single popular assembly, even in matters

involving life and death, there was no appeal. Under such a constitution no state could hope to initiate, far less effect, any great scheme of conquest. So long as the plans of military officers were liable to be upset by a resolution carried at a public meeting, or by rank insubordination of soldiers in camp, what prospect could there be of gaining an empire by force of arms? Even in Sparta, where the strictest discipline was conjoined with a noble self-sacrificing patriotism, the constitution was incompatible with imperial power. It was nominally monarchical, but the king was really in the hands of the Five Ephors—an oligarchy of the most arbitrary type.

*The "Cyropædia" a Plea for absolute Monarchy.*

Xenophon had given not a little thought to the science of government, and was keenly alive to the difficulty of arriving at any satisfactory form of political constitution. Men had often abandoned popular governments in favour of some other sort, but had monarchies, or oligarchies, or "tyrannies" fared any better? At one time the Spartan system, which was a compound of monarchy and aristocracy, commended itself to Xenophon as the best that could be devised, but he afterwards fell from this opinion, and when describing the crushing defeat of the Spartans at Leuctra in B.C. 371 he speaks of her fate as thoroughly deserved. Was there, then, no solution of the vexed problem? Apparently towards the close of his life Xenophon became convinced that "the government of men is not amongst the things that are impossible, nor amongst the things that are difficult, if undertaken with understanding and

skill.”<sup>1</sup> What had at length produced in him this conviction was the striking character and marvellous career of Cyrus the Persian. Although the *Cyropædia* purports to inquire “by what birth, with what natural disposition, and under what discipline and education bred, he so much excelled in the art of governing men,”<sup>1</sup> it is in reality a somewhat garrulous gathering up of floating traditions regarding the rise of the Persian empire under the great Cyrus, and at the same time a statement of Xenophon’s own ideas about education, character-building, and statecraft. In its pages the Persian ruler is portrayed as a paragon of wisdom and virtue, and held up as a shining example to those desirous of knowing how to win and administer a powerful empire. As the result of his long experience and observation, Xenophon was therefore led to look in the direction of absolute monarchy as the likeliest foundation for the fulfilment of his hopes with regard to the future of the Hellenic race. This is the idea underlying the *Cyropædia*, which, if not avowedly a novel with a purpose, is essentially a plea for absolute monarchy in the form of a romantic and idealized portrait of the first Cyrus. It is an axiom of the Socratic school that a single ruler endowed with the “archic” soul will govern more wisely than a plurality of rulers, and in several of his writings Xenophon endorses this. In the *Cyropædia* he gives an extended, not to say prolix, practical illustration of this doctrine, showing that in Cyrus the Persian empire possessed such a man.

A striking commentary upon the views expressed by Xenophon was soon to be furnished by the career of the

<sup>1</sup> *Cyropædia*, i.

great Macedonian. Not that Alexander had benefited by the perusal of a book which in its essential teaching coincided so closely with his own ideas and preferences, for the anti-Hellenic spirit of the *Cyropædia* would bring it under the ban of Aristotle, and probably cause him to withhold it from a pupil so notoriously inclined to embrace Oriental notions. But by dint of his own force of mind and will Alexander soon showed what could be accomplished by a monarch possessing the talent to rule, and it is a significant fact that not very long after the issue of Xenophon's work monarchical government was almost universal among the cities of Greece. For centuries it continued to prevail throughout the Hellenistic world, and the Ptolemies and Seleucidæ both claimed and were regarded as possessing a kind of divine authority. Xenophon's observation of the conditions obtaining in Persia had also led him to note what loyalty to the sovereign is fostered under a hereditary monarchy, and to form the opinion that the attribution of godlike authority to kings might be helpful in the administration of an empire. It is an interesting fact that while the ancient doctrine of the "divine right" of kings has everywhere—even in Germany—been abandoned, the loyalty that prompts men cheerfully to perform the humblest tasks and even to meet death itself in the king's service, shows no sign of decadence after the lapse of more than two thousand years.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Recent proof of this was given in connexion with the late Russian Czar's assumption of the leadership of his army in the field. To the Russians the "Little Father" was more than a sovereign; he was the religious head of their nation, with rights and attributes almost more than human. And with his accession to the supreme command the European struggle became for the Russian soldier a holy war



*The Dream of Isocrates.*

Persia had long been a dreaded foe to the Greeks, but the narrative of the "Retreat of the Ten Thousand" in Xenophon's *Anabasis* had shown them how vulnerable the empire was. Its rulers were weaklings, and could not hope to withstand an army of Greek mercenaries. Such a revelation could scarcely fail to tempt the Greeks to engage in a trial of strength. A first attempt to mobilize a Panhellenic force against the dominant Eastern power was made under Agesilaus of Sparta, but proved fruitless. The idea, however, gained considerable vitality, and it found a vigorous exponent in Isocrates, one of the ten Attic orators, and head of a school of rhetoric and practical culture, of which the spirit was Panhellenic. Deterred by a weak voice and lack of nerve from playing a part in public assemblies, Isocrates was nevertheless a man of ability and moral courage, and made it his main business to deal with political problems in a series of pamphlets characterized by charm of style as well as by earnest conviction and breadth of view. What Xenophon had partially adumbrated, Isocrates pointedly and definitely advocated. The idea of a united Greece advancing to the conquest of Persia even became a kind of obsession with him; it was the dream of his life. He saw his country the prey of political faction and party strife, while socially and economically its condition was of the worst. To his mind the one remedy

in which death was far more welcome than defeat. That the subsequent outbreak of anarchy and Bolshevism led to the dethronement and murder of the Czar does not alter the fact that in the popular mind he was invested with a halo virtually divine. See Sir George Buchanan's, *My Mission to Russia*, ii. p. 46.

for these evils was to rouse the Greeks to embark upon a great national enterprise which would unite them in a common enthusiasm. Such a task lay ready to their hand in the invasion of Asia. The hour had struck for the carrying out of what had so nearly been attained when the younger Cyrus by foolhardiness perished at Cunaxa. Let them therefore, he urged, join their forces "to deliver the Greeks from their feuds, and to crush barbarian insolence." Truly a splendid ideal, but how was it to be realized? At first Isocrates thought the problem might be solved if Athens and Sparta would only discard their jealousies and unite their forces, and he presses for this in his glowing *Panegyricus*. Disappointed in the result, he next entered on the quest for a single man equal to the occasion. After vainly appealing in succession to Dionysius I., the ruler of Syracuse, to "the children of Jason," tyrant of Pheræ, and to Archidemus III., son of Agesilaus, to undertake the task, Isocrates addressed himself to Philip II. of Macedon, whose supremacy in the Greek world was undisputed long before his victory at Cunaxa.<sup>1</sup> The suggestion that he should endeavour to divert the small Greek states from internecine strife, unite them in a national confederacy, and launch them on a new career of military aggression, was quite in keeping with Philip's own inclination, but for a task of such magnitude careful, systematic, and patient preparation was essential. He gave himself to the work,

<sup>1</sup> The statement that the aged Isocrates—he lived to be ninety-eight—starved himself to death on hearing the result of that battle is probably legendary, and is in fact contradicted by his third "letter"—the genuineness of which there is no reason to suspect—in which he appears to adopt the view that Philip's victory at Cunaxa would clear the way for his assumption of the leadership of Greece against Persia.



but the problem of arranging and organizing a quadruple *entente* by which the forces of Illyria and Thrace should act along with those of Macedonia and Greece absorbed the energies of Philip for more than half a generation, and just as his dispositions were practically completed he fell a victim to an assassin's knife. In his son Alexander, however, Providence had in readiness the instrument by which the long cherished purpose was to be effected on a scale as yet undreamt of. To his conquering genius as King of Macedon and commander of his own army the first wide diffusion of Hellenism is directly attributable.

## CHAPTER II.

### ALEXANDER THE GREAT AND HIS POLICY OF HELLENIZATION.

THE hour had come, and with it the man. Even Alexander's military genius might not have been equal to his colossal task had not his father Philip so well prepared the way by unifying the numerous city-states of Greece, just as in modern times the little city-states of Italy were unified by Victor Immanuel, and as the states of Germany were welded into one after the Franco-Prussian War. As it was, he was fortunate enough to come upon the scene at the psychological moment, and tactful enough to make use of the two great weapons which lay ready to his hand. These were the warlike prowess of the Macedonians and the intellectual culture of the Greeks. With the one in his right hand, so to speak, and the other in his left, he went forth to subdue kingdoms and to inoculate them with the Hellenic spirit.

It is not without significance, either as regards the immediate success of Alexander's campaigns, or as regards the future of the various component parts into which his empire was afterwards divided, that he selected as his generals Macedonian princes who had been companions of his youth. These men were themselves hereditary nobles accustomed to enjoy each in his own

principality a prestige shared by no commoner, and the troops under their command acknowledged their authority the more readily on this account. Thus Seleucus, Antigonus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander, and others, were from the first associated with Alexander's fortunes. They had all been trained in the same military school—not in the competitive exercises of the palæstra, but in hunting the boar and the wolf amongst the trackless wilds of Macedon. Than this no conceivable training could have been more conducive to the production of hardy and brave men. In Alexander's case this was supplemented on the intellectual side, and that during his most plastic years, by the tuition of Aristotle, who imbued him with a lasting love of Greek learning. This explains the combination in his personality of the greatest courage with the highest culture of the age.

### *Alexander's Campaigns and Military Tactics.*

Without a blow struck Alexander received the submission of the Greeks, and was appointed leader of their forces against Persia. After totally defeating the Persians at the Granicus in B.C. 334, he routed Darius III. Codomannus at Issus in Cilicia towards the close of the following year. In order to safeguard his lines of communication with Greece, he then advanced into Phœnicia, where the stubborn resistance of Tyre checked his progress for seven months (B.C. 332). Two months more were spent in reducing Gaza as a preliminary to reaching his next objective—Egypt. There his dominion was gladly hailed as a deliverance from the hated Persians,

and the city of Alexandria, which he then founded, still commemorates his bloodless victory. Marching into Assyria in B.C. 331, he finally crushed the power of Persia on the plain of Gaugamela.<sup>1</sup> Having fled through Media into Parthia, Darius was murdered by the Bactrian satrap Bessus, who in turn was put to death by Alexander when he had subjugated eastern Irān. The conqueror seized the four capitals, Susa and Babylon in the west, and Pasargadæ and Persepolis in the east, with their vast treasures (B.C. 330). During the next year he overran Drangiāna (E. Afghanistan), advanced through Gedrosia (S.W. Baluchistān) to Kandahār (Al-Iskander = Alexandria), effected the passage of the Hindu Kush, and reached India through the Kābul and Kyber passes. In B.C. 326 he crossed the Indus and defeated the Indian prince Porus (Paurava, the king of the Purus) at the Hydaspes (Jihlam). Still pursuing his onward march, he penetrated to the Hyphasis (Beās), on the farthest boundary of the Panjāb, scattering the Indians who resisted his progress, and confidently hoping in a few days more to arrive at the Ganges. But at this point he had perforce to call a halt, as his veterans—who had been disgusted with his cruelty in ordering the assassination of his old friend Philotas, and with his murder at Samarkand of Klitus, his foster-brother, in a fit of passion—absolutely refused to be led farther into the unknown. Sailing down the Hydaspes and the Indus to the ocean in B.C. 325, he dispatched Nearchus with the fleet to the mouth of the Tigris, and himself marched with his army first to Pasar-

<sup>1</sup> Usually known as the battle of Arbela, although that place lies more than 40 Roman miles to the S.E.

gadæ, and then to Susa, which was reached in the beginning of the following year. At Susa he married Statira, daughter of Darius, and Parysatis, daughter of Ochus, by way of encouraging the adoption of his policy of racial fusion. In B.C. 324 he visited Ecbatana, where he suffered the loss by death of his friend Hephæstion. On his way to Babylon he received the homage of ambassadors from every quarter, and could not be dissuaded from entering the city by the most ominous warnings of Chaldæan priests. In B.C. 323 Alexander ordered ships to be built in Phœnicia and Babylon with a view to the conquest of Arabia; but, just when all was ready for this enterprise, he was prostrated by a fever, the result of a drunken debauch, and died after a twelve years' reign, and before attaining his thirty-third birthday. So prematurely ended the career of this prince of generals, whose unrivalled powers relegate even Hannibal and Napoleon to a second rank. Notwithstanding the excesses and crimes which stained his personal character, it was his proud distinction to remove the barriers that separated East from West, to revitalize by the alchemy of Hellenism the countries he subdued, and all unconsciously to pave the way for Christianity throughout the wide world.

By what military tactics was so great a result achieved? Broadly speaking, Alexander succeeded by the use of methods and machinery already employed by his father Philip, although he certainly introduced modifications and improvements of his own. Thus while in the matter of siege artillery Philip had adopted all the newest devices, it was left to Alexander to develop

the effectiveness of the Macedonian army through the extension of the most scientific appliances to the department of field artillery also. Catapults capable of propelling stones to one-sixth of a mile were in those days formidable engines of war, and frequently enabled him to dislodge an enemy from the strongest strategic positions. Another thing worthy of note is Alexander's attitude towards the Macedonian phalanx—that massive square of infantry which the Romans afterwards found so formidable. This famous fighting formation had several drawbacks. It could operate only on level ground ; it prevented the use of slings and projectiles ; and it was not suited for dealing with rear-attacks. Alexander therefore virtually discarded the use of the phalanx in favour of the method of cavalry charges, by means of which he had won the day for his father at Chæronea. The phalanx he used “ merely as a defensive arm, which occupied and threatened the enemy while the decisive work was done on his right wing,”<sup>1</sup> and latterly he began to split it up into smaller and more mobile bands. Anything calculated to hinder rapidity of movement and the prompt forcing of a decisive issue was distasteful to him. The Oriental device of employing elephants and scythe chariots in battle he rejected as tending to confused disorder : he placed reliance rather upon concerted action between the horsemen who hurled the spear and the lightly armed footguards who supported them. His own special friends and the Macedonian nobility were retained for the cavalry service in accordance with the practice observed by his father Philip, a man of sound judgment, who knew

<sup>1</sup> Mahaffy, *op. cit.* p. 38.

well how to encourage the loyalty of the Macedonian aristocracy.

*Significance of Alexander's Conquests.*

Alexander the Great is one of the foremost figures in history. His empire, extending from the Nile to the Indus, was the creation of his own genius. Little more than a decade sufficed to lay the Eastern world at his feet. His career of conquest consisted practically of a single triumphal march. If it was brilliantly successful, it was pathetically short. By his untimely death at thirty-two—an age when most men have scarcely more than entered upon their life-work—it was quickly brought to an end. But the fruits of it were destined to remain as an abiding influence in the earth. For marvellous as were his conquests in themselves, they were still more so in their results. By opening the sluices of Hellenistic culture, and causing it freely to overflow all the countries to which he led his victorious army, he initiated a world-wide revolution. Things were pulled out of their ancient grooves. Traditional ideas were rudely shaken; opposing creeds and tendencies came into sharp collision; regarding time-honoured customs the question arose whether they would not be more honoured in the breach than the observance. The thoughts and methods of Western civilization were so projected upon the life of the Orient as to create an intellectual and social ferment of a type highly favourable to the development of a new philosophy of life. East and West began to act and react upon each other as they had never done before. Barriers of race and creed were broken down, and there took place at once an



upheaval and a fusion of the spiritual possessions of mankind. Primitive ideas which had been lost sight of came to the surface again, and in fruitful union with newer elements derived from sundry sources produced fresh forms of religious thought and practice. The sectional and self-contained aspect of human life gave way to a larger and more inspiring conception of the possibilities open to the race. Everything parochial was doomed. The reign of the cosmopolitan was about to begin. All the elements of life and thought contributed by the different nationalities were thrown together in solution so to speak, and the solvent which was to fuse them into one was the Greek spirit.

Alexander's dream of the fusion of races into one vast empire saturated with the spirit and culture of Greece necessarily implied a distinct departure from the teachings of Aristotle and the traditions of Greek democracy. Although a pupil of the famous Stagirite, he was no adherent either of the Aristotelian or of any other school of philosophy. The fashion of dividing the race into Greeks and barbarians he rejected as out of date and inapplicable to the long civilized sons of the East. As one concerned with the problems of practical statesmanship, he perceived the futility of adhering to a doctrinaire system according to which such men should be treated differently from Greeks. There floated before his mind the grand imperial idea of the fusion of Greek intellectual and political life with the gorgeously æsthetic civilization of the East, until he resolved to devote his life to the realization of it.<sup>1</sup> The establishment of Alexander's dominion meant also the subversion of Greek democracy.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 1, p. 377.



Instead of a multitude of independent cities, all were made subject to monarchical rule. Passionately attached to freedom, the Greeks had now perforce to bear the yoke of the Macedonian empire. Those who could never brook that one Greek should rule over his fellow had at length to submit to the imposition of a monarchy from without. Till now life under a royal sovereign had been but a Utopian idea for the Hellenic mind. The philosophers admitted indeed the natural right of the most worthy to reign over mankind, provided he could be found, but they left the impression somehow that he would be as difficult to find as the stone that would turn everything it should touch into gold. Yet in the person of Alexander there had apparently arisen the very kingly master whom no one ever expected actually to see.

Owing to his early death Alexander's aim was never quite realized. He had not time to consolidate his work. The kingdom he founded was speedily broken up, but his ideas lived on.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, they continued to dominate the life and thought of the civilized world for centuries. The Greeks had lost their freedom only to become co-operators in giving effect to the Hellenizing policy which the genius of Alexander had conceived. Hitherto their circumscribed life had sufficed them. Their city was their kingdom, and they were happy in performing the duties of citizenship. But Alexander's conquests had now opened up a new destiny to the race, and they had to find a fresh field for their energies. Gradually it became clear

<sup>1</sup> "The breaking up of Alexander's empire, which followed his death, was like the breaking of the box which permits the perfume and ointment to escape. Hellenism became even more cosmopolitan."

—Allin, *Race and Religion*, p. 20.

to them what their new rôle was to be. It was beyond comparison greater than their former restricted career. Theirs was to be the truly magnificent task of annexing the known world for Greece in the sense of permeating it with the Greek spirit and securing the general adoption of Greek manners and customs.

*Greek Liberty under Macedonian Rule.*

The all-pervading and many-sided force usually termed Hellenism was unlike anything the world had ever known. Hitherto men had to choose between the primitive tribal system and life under a monarchy. Thus the Israelites decided to have a king, although well aware of the loss of liberty thereby entailed.<sup>1</sup> In Egypt and Babylonia civilization had always meant despotism. It was the distinction of the Greeks that they knew how to combine culture with independence.<sup>2</sup> Not that this was completely or at once accomplished. For in spite of the opposition of Demosthenes and others they accepted the Macedonian monarchy, and thus submitted to a certain loss of freedom. But they acquiesced in imperialism only in order to save themselves from barbarism. And after all there was much to reconcile the Hellenes to the new dominion. Already for years the Macedonian court had been a rendezvous of Greek scholars and artists, and the education of Philip's son had been entrusted to Aristotle, at that time the supreme representative of Greek culture. Besides, the Mace-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 8<sup>5</sup> ff.

<sup>2</sup> "Freedom had existed before the Greeks, just as civilization had existed before them. But these two had existed only in separation. The achievement of the Greeks is that they brought freedom and civilization into union."—Bevan, *The House of Seleucus*, i. p. 2 f.

donians were of Greek stock, and Hellenism was eminently portable and transmissible. Nor should it be forgotten that for centuries after Alexander's death the Macedonian sword continued to protect Greek civilization and culture from destruction at the hands of savage invaders from the North. The service thus rendered, however, met with scant appreciation from the Greeks, who from the heights of their artistic superiority looked down haughtily upon the stout-limbed Macedonian rustics by whom they had been eclipsed alike in politics and in war. Goethe has said : " There is nothing more intolerable to your neighbour than your superiority " ; but, curiously enough, the Macedonians themselves seem to have acquiesced so far in the estimate put upon them by the Greeks. It is perhaps natural for the illiterate to defer to the learned, and for the country squire to bow down before the city magnate. In this instance at all events a large measure of liberty was allowed to the Greeks under Macedonian suzerainty. They exhibited in consequence a spirit of self-assertion, even to the extent of passing resolutions protesting that they were reduced to a state of slavery, whenever their Macedonian masters interfered to put down robbery and lawlessness. They developed a tendency to criticize, to plume themselves on their former greatness, and to appeal for redress to the rival power of Egypt.<sup>1</sup> Even

<sup>1</sup> At a later stage they secured a measure of Home Rule under the Romans, who, however, ultimately suppressed their never-ending squabbles by placing the country under a Roman governor. As the new lords of the East, they likewise reduced Macedonia to a province under military rule, and deported to Italy all the nobility and the leading inhabitants whose patriotic sentiments might have made them troublesome. Thus tragically ended the history of Macedonia as a nation.

under the yoke of the new dominion they could not renounce the spirit of freedom, and it is worthy of note that rather than deprive the Greeks of their liberties Alexander himself elected to pose as a Greek.

*Alexander's Attitude to non-Greek Religions.*

That this was one of wise toleration may be inferred from his treatment of two races differing so widely in their religious practice as the Jews and the Egyptians.

During the siege of Tyre, according to Josephus, Alexander requisitioned auxiliaries and provisions from Jaddua, the Jewish high priest, who, however, to his chagrin, replied that in loyalty to Darius, the Persian king, he could not comply with the demand. After reducing both Tyre and Gaza, Alexander turned in wrath against Jerusalem, but was deterred from wreaking vengeance on the hapless city by the sight of the high priest, who, in his pontifical robes and at the head of a great procession, went forth to meet him. The explanation of this *volte-face*, as given to the trusted Parmenion, was that at Dios in Macedonia he had in his dreams seen this same person thus arrayed, and been by him both urged to attack Persia and assured of a successful issue. For the rest, Alexander conceded to the Jews the fullest religious liberty, as well as exemption from tribute in the sabbatical year. Attracted by his offer of military service with leave to honour all Jewish observances, willing recruits rallied to his standard. Legendary as the story probably is, it helps us to understand how it was

possible for Alexander, starting with an army of only thirty or forty thousand trained soldiers, to overrun and subdue the immense tracts of territory between Greece and the Panjāb. By such magnanimous treatment of foreigners he had found the secret of another sort of conquest than that effected by force of arms—the conquest, namely, of men's hearts. On this account it was that from Judæa so “many were ready to serve as soldiers with him.”<sup>1</sup>

A similar policy was pursued in Egypt. In marked contrast to the Persians, Alexander respected the religious feelings of the Egyptians, offered sacrifices to their gods—to Apis in particular, and did homage to Jupiter Ammon at his famous shrine in the desert.<sup>2</sup> The last-named act was an essential passport to royalty in the land of the Pharaohs, where no one could be recognized by the priests as legitimate king until he had been declared by Ammon to be his beloved son, *i.e.* divine, and the heir of immortality. On his return from Egypt to Phœnicia, probably as an offset to his sacrifices to Apis and by way of signaling the supremacy of Greek culture, Alexander, with the aid of some Greek actors, carried through a splendid programme of gymnastic, dramatic, and musical competitions. His generous recognition of

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8. 5.

<sup>2</sup> The complaisance shown by Alexander towards the religion of Egypt was continued under the régime of his successors. Indeed, even in the absence of direct testimony, it is difficult to resist the conclusion, not only that Ptolemy may have attended Alexander in Egypt, and that his shrewd observation of its resources and natural defensive strength afterwards led to his prompt demand for this as his province, but that the impression made upon him of the excellent effect of the great conqueror's religious policy induced him to adopt that policy as his own.

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ancient Egyptian rites certainly in no way affected his devotion to Hellenism or his belief in its unifying power, although it may partly justify the remark that during his four months in Egypt he "flirted with religious emotions."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, i. p. 236.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF HELLENISM.

IN the course of centuries Greek culture had consolidated itself and become a tradition. By removing the barriers between East and West Alexander's victories prepared the ground for its annexation of practically the whole world, and although it necessarily underwent some modification in the process, it stamped its own character upon all the new monarchies which sprang up after Alexander's death. Politically distinct, these kingdoms were also often at war with one another; but inasmuch as they all shared the spiritual inheritance which the Greeks—the people with the hall-mark—had won, they were nevertheless connected by an inner bond of union. Thus it came to pass that all knowledge of man and things, however acquired, was cast into the classical mould. Even for the Romans, who ultimately served themselves heirs to Alexander's conquests, there was no exemption from this rule. Vergil was the imitator of Homer; Cicero recognized Demosthenes as the standard of perfection; Seneca modelled his philosophy upon that of the Stoics. In every department of science, literature, and art, Rome was the pupil of Greece.

#### *Solidarity of the Hellenistic World.*

The masterly influence of Hellenism is clearly reflected in the not altogether unrelated spheres of recrea-



tion and religious worship. For the Greeks the Olympic games meant more than an athletic contest ; they were also a religious festival ; and as a means of unifying the Greek race helped to compensate for their lack of political cohesion.

“ The Attic festivals, like those of the Roman Church, joined recreation with religion, and were jovial, human holidays. Such, for instance, was the race to Phalerum at the Oscophoria, in which, after the religious ceremonies were over, all the youth of Athens took part, the day ending with a universal picnic on the shores of the bay. Such was the dancing on greased skins at the Dionysia ; and a sport mentioned by Suidas, in which drinkers standing on inflated wine-skins, at a signal from a trumpet, drank for a prize. Such were the ceremonies at the Great Panathenæa, to be seen to-day in stone on the walls of the British Museum, though the idealized figures of the Elgin marbles give us little idea of the gaiety of the real scene. There were boat-races, torch-races, foot-races, horse-races, dances of men in full armour, leaping in and out of flying chariots, javelin-throwing from horseback, cock-fighting, musical and gymnastic contests, prizes for manly beauty, recitations from Homer, a speech by a chosen orator of the day, and, finally, the great procession to the Acropolis, in which a sacred ship was drawn through the city, the yellow embroidered robe destined for the statue of Athena Polias blowing out from its mast, and the whole population of Athens, on foot, on horseback, in chariots, following in its train.” <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Livingstone, *The Greek Genius and its Meaning to us*, p. 130 f. See Note 2, p. 378.



In like manner, by way of provision for the amusement of the people and giving expression to the mere joy of living, every considerable town throughout the Hellenistic world had its gymnasium and racecourse, its theatre and amphitheatre. Games and athletic sports were as eagerly practised as they were in Greece itself.<sup>1</sup> In many places such as Damascus, Gaza, and Ptolemais,<sup>2</sup> the Greek religion superseded the native cults, and even where these maintained their supremacy, as at Joppa and Ascalon, they were largely modified through the importation of Greek elements.

More than a century before the Jewish revolt under the Maccabees the power of Hellenism was seriously menaced; but the cloud passed. The invasion in B.C. 278 of Macedonia and Thrace by the fierce Celtic hordes who afterwards settled in Galatia, and terrorized the neighbouring peoples until they were subdued by the Romans towards the close of the second century B.C., had the effect of promoting the solidarity of the Hellenistic world. At first indeed it threatened to introduce disintegration and confusion, but ere long it united as with a freemason's grip the Greek-speaking inhabitants of every civilized nation. It was felt that even the dark-skinned Ethiopian who came under this category stood upon an altogether different level from the northern savages to whom nothing seemed sacred. The extent to which the unification of the Hellenistic world had been secured finds significant illustration also in the history of the "upper provinces" of Bactria and

<sup>1</sup> From an incidental reference in 2 Macc. 4<sup>18-20</sup> we know that every fourth (? or fifth) year athletic contests were held at Tyre.

<sup>2</sup> The Old Testament Akko (Judg. 1<sup>31</sup>).

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Sogdiana. Although these had revolted from Antiochus Theos and set up kings of their own, the new monarchs bore Greek names, issued a Greek coinage, and counted themselves successors to Alexander. And if Hellenism could thus assert itself in these remote regions, it is not surprising that it was completely triumphant in its real home on the Mediterranean. When, for example, in B.C. 227 the city of Rhodes was almost destroyed by an earthquake, gifts in money and in kind poured in for the restoration of the great financial clearing-house of that epoch—a fact which goes to show that the cohesion of the Hellenistic world was due to commercial as well as to linguistic unity.

#### *Monarchical Government.*

The changed conditions under which the advance of Hellenism proceeded not only synchronized with, but formed an integral part of, that advance. The new circumstances and the Hellenistic spirit fitted each other like lock and key. So much so that monarchical government may be fairly reckoned one of the leading characteristics of Hellenism as distinguished from the anti-monarchical creed of ancient Hellas. Hellenism built itself up on the rapidly dissolving constitutions of the old city-states in which social order had been preserved by statutory laws defining the rights and regulating the relations of the various classes of citizens within the commonwealth. Heretofore free citizens, settlers of foreign extraction, and slaves had severally been compelled to conform to the established order. The practice of the state religion had been obligatory, and rigidly enforced by the priests. But with the dawn of

the Hellenistic period the old order changed. Under the disintegrating influences of the age, political and social organizations were effectually broken up. In the numerous newly founded cities which sprang up over so wide an area there were no such clear-cut distinctions made between burgesses and immigrants as had prevailed in the city-states whose constitution was framed after the old Hellenic models. Men had no longer to do with ancient polity, but were subject to the personal will of the reigning king. The day of republics was gone, and that of monarchy had come. It was under these altered conditions that Hellenism succeeded in making a second conquest of the world for which Alexander's campaigns had prepared the way. Absolute monarchy was bound up with its very genius. Monarchical rule was not only an aid to Hellenism ; it was part and parcel of it, and one of its most outstanding features.

*A levelling Culture.*

Another notable characteristic of Hellenism is that it was a levelling culture. Towards this result the mere circumstance that the Greek language, spoken and written, was everywhere the instrument by which it was propagated, was in itself a contributing factor. In those days to speak Greek was to be a citizen of the world. It lifted men out of the narrow groove of nationalism, and put into their hands the key to all knowledge embodied in the masterpieces of literature. In this way it became possible to breathe a larger atmosphere, and for multitudes life received a wider outlook. One happy consequence of this was that petty restrictions formerly imposed by social caste were brushed aside.

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There set in a distinct improvement in the position of the lower classes, who were filled with new aspirations begotten of the consciousness that possibilities hitherto unheard of were now within their reach. Latent ambitions were stirred, and neither materially nor intellectually nor spiritually were the masses of the people content to be as they had been. A fresh impulse and a new zest were given to life, when men could meet on the broad basis of humanity and of a common civilization, and when no one was deprived of "a place in the sun."

### *Accentuation of Personality.*

A fourth prominent characteristic of Hellenism is found in its accentuation of personality. Formerly a man was estimated according to the rank assigned him in the body politic, but in the new Hellenistic world the standard of value was altered. It was no longer the custom to determine the worth of any citizen by his social position apart from what he was in himself. On the contrary, what was brought into the calculation was his own qualities of mind and heart, his own capacity, his own record. Alexander's greatest successes were felt to have been due to his personality. It was not rank that counted, but individual merit. In this we see the practical application of the Socratic teaching concerning the worth of the individual. The Hebrew psalmist speaks of a time when "a man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees" (Ps. 74<sup>5</sup>). This was not necessarily the standard of worth ruling in the Hellenistic world, but it coincides with it to the extent of appraising a person in terms of his own achievements. The principle involved—that of

judging a man not by any artificial class distinction, but by his personal qualities—is of lasting importance, and has been reinforced by the teaching of Christianity, for which in this particular it helped materially to pave the way.

*Florid Rhetoric.*

Amid the new conditions of Hellenism the study and practice of rhetoric underwent a distinct change. First founded as an art, for forensic purposes, by Corax of Syracuse in the fifth century B.C., and further developed by his pupil Tisias and others, it ultimately received scientific treatment at the hands of Aristotle, whose *Rhetoric* dates from about B.C. 325. From a plethora of material indicating how various speakers had succeeded in convincing the minds or kindling the feelings of their audience, the great philosopher with consummate ability set himself to deduce general rules by the observance of which a speaker may always secure a similar result. Dividing rhetoric into (1) deliberative, (2) ornamental, (3) forensic, he deals exhaustively with each of these branches of the subject. While this scientific method was adhered to by the Peripatetics, the rhetorical schools of Asia exhibited a marked development downwards. "Amid mixed populations, the pure traditions of the best Greek taste had been dissociated from the use of the Greek language,"<sup>1</sup> and as a result the Attic school of rhetoric gave way before the Asiatic, which was characterized by artificiality and consisted largely of "florid declamation or strained conceits." Flashy oratory was substituted for a mode of speech which was

<sup>1</sup> Professor R. C. Jebb, art. "Rhetoric" in *Ency. Brit.* (9th ed.).

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natural and real. Little attention was paid to matter and form. The principles of correct speaking and composition were ignored, the orator's chief concern being to make flourishes. No longer studied as an art, rhetoric soon degenerated into mere tricks of speech, and the frothy orator sought to secure his end not by a reasoned treatment of his theme, but by means of quips, sarcasm, and empty bluster. Although in the second century B.C. a reaction against this artificiality, and in the direction of greater naturalness, was set on foot by a rhetorical school at Rhodes, it is significant that the Asiatic style was still in vogue with Hortensius and other Roman orators a hundred years later.

It is an interesting question how far the modern Christian sermon is a legacy from the rhetorical art of the Greeks. One writer says: "Inevitably, Christianity made contacts with the Greek world. In the process of interpenetration that followed, Christianity both gave and took. . . . One of the things it gave up was prophesying: one of the things it took from the Greek world was that which became the Christian sermon. The form and content of the Christian message were changed, and remain changed to this day. The prophet's habit of spontaneous utterance gave way to the orator's habit of polished discourse, adorned with the finest phrases selected from the abundant literature of myth, fable, and classic lore. With the change in habit came a change in spirit and purpose. The voice of the prophet had ceased; the voice of the preacher had begun." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miles H. Krumbine in *Century Magazine*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, 10th March 1922.



But were not the Old Testament prophets at least preachers to their own times? And was not Christian preaching simply the application to the new circumstances of the homiletic discourse which formed part of the regular service of the Jewish synagogue? There was no need to borrow the practice of preaching from Hellenism; it was already to hand. Under Hellenistic influences the Christian message may indeed have changed its form, but in what respects, and to what extent, was its content thereby altered? This being the important question dealt with in the final section of the present work, nothing need be said regarding it at this stage.

*Mingling of Religions and Ideals.*

The Hellenistic movement was further characterized by the mingling of religions (Oriental, Egyptian, Greek, etc.) and of opposing ideals of life and thought, and this too is to be viewed as a preparation for Christianity. Never had there been throughout the world so much free interchange of thought. Men were thrown together in various associations which brought them into contact with new forms of religion. Native modes of worship had to enter into competition with strange cults imported by settlers from foreign parts. Diverse philosophical and religious currents coursed through the corporate life of each community. Sometimes these ran in open antagonism, at other times they mingled their waters and flowed on in composite volume. "Enlightenment and superstition, expert knowledge of mysteries and radical scepticism, strove for precedence. Itinerant orators, founders of religions, conjurers, and soothsayers paraded town and country recruiting

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adherents. It was a restless, agitated age. As the successors of Alexander strove for political power, so did adepts in secret doctrines, ethical preachers of popular philosophy, called and uncalled world-benefactors thrust themselves into the public life.”<sup>1</sup> In the clash of opposing ideals and interests, and in the motley adjustments brought about by this immense ferment of a syncretistic culture which sought, like the Ptolemies in the Serapeum, to collect and appropriate everything of value, it is impossible to detect any primary impulse, except perhaps, amid all contrariety, the effort to reach a universal conception of the world. But if this was the end in view, it was defeated, as Heinrici remarks, partly through the strength of superstition, and partly through the opposing schools of philosophy, which were agreed at least in fostering the aristocratic self-respect of the Greeks.

#### *The Purity of Hellenic Culture necessarily diluted by its Expansion.*

If by means of Alexander's conquests Hellenism became more widely diffused, its internal development was also thereby correspondingly arrested. It did not, and could not, maintain its pristine purity. It did not, for although science, especially under the patronage of the elder Ptolemies, continued to make substantial progress, there was a manifest decline in literature, art, and philosophical thought: poets like Euripides, Æschylus, and Sophocles; statuaries and sculptors like Pheidias and Praxiteles; philosophers like Plato and Aristotle no longer appeared; their successors were

<sup>1</sup> Heinrici, *Hellenismus und Christentum*, p. 5.



content for the most part to reproduce, interpret, and popularize ideas already arrived at. It could not, for the Eastern peoples who had come under Alexander's rule by compulsion or by consent were not uncultured barbarians who had everything to learn and nothing to teach. That the Greeks could not ignore the ancient civilization of Egypt, the astronomical attainments of Babylon, or the religions of Buddha or Zoroaster in India and Persia, was from the first clearly recognized by the great conqueror himself. If he succeeded in Hellenizing the East, he was also in turn himself orientalized. And the same thing is true of Greece, which became virtually a unit in the Eastern empire, and felt the impact of Eastern life and thought. While therefore the conquests of Alexander Hellenized Asia, they likewise put a check upon the real Hellenic spirit, alike in respect of its passion for political freedom, its creative genius, and its exquisite skill in all that forms the technique of literature and art. The truth is that the spirit of the old Hellenic civilization, in sharp contrast to that of the later Hellenism, ran directly counter to the principle of monarchy, while monarchy in practice tended more and more to assume the form of despotism ; and under such conditions the further development of pure Hellenic culture became impossible. Yet it would be a mistake unduly to minimize the importance of the heritage left to the world by the Hellenistic period. If it failed to produce works of genius such as those that represent the Greek spirit at its purest, it was at least characterized by a keen intellectual activity by no means confined to the preservation of the texts of ancient authors, the writing of scholia, and the cataloguing of libraries. In the practical systems of the

### 38 *The Characteristic Features of Hellenism*

Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics, the modern world has found perhaps a still more valuable inheritance than in the subtle metaphysics of Plato or the encyclopædic learning of Aristotle. At all events it is worthy of note that, by giving themselves to ethical in preference to metaphysical studies, philosophers had before the commencement of the third century B.C. attained a degree of public importance such as they had never previously enjoyed.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MEANS EMPLOYED TO SPREAD HELLENISTIC CULTURE.

WITH a growing consciousness of their great mission the Greeks now set themselves to carry it out. Wherever they lived, they were as leaven, and the society around them as dough ; they were out to Hellenize the world. What, then, were the means used to effect this purpose ?

#### *The Greek Tongue.*

As already indicated, the foremost instrument in the diffusion of Hellenism was just the Greek tongue itself. Through the adoption of that language as the universal medium for the interchange of thought and transaction of business a vast step was already taken towards the achievement of the end in view. Greek is admittedly the richest and strongest, the most beautiful and flexible, the most subtle and delicate organ in all the repertory of human speech. And as the result of Alexander's campaigns it began to be spoken all over the world. His conquests did more than prepare the way for its diffusion ; they also determined the particular form which it assumed. Already adopted as the language of the Macedonian court, the Attic type of Greek became the basis of the official speech throughout the East. It was, of course, not the pure Attic of Plato and Demos-

thenes, or even the transitional usage of Aristotle, that was thus introduced, but the popular dialect, which naturally took on many local variations. The Macedonians aimed merely at being understood. They had no literary instinct, and their language produced no literature. It gave rise, however, to a new form of popular speech, which became the common heritage of the mixed races of Egypt and Asia, and "the outward and visible sign of the unity of Hellenism." The old distinction between the language of letters, the spoken language of the educated, and the vernacular began to disappear. And it was the everyday speech of the people that prevailed and gathered strength till it became the common speech of the whole empire.<sup>1</sup> Thus "the spread of Greek neutralized the confusion of Babel."<sup>2</sup> Not only was it the language of trade and ordinary intercourse, but in a specialized form it also came to be the language of learning and culture. With the adoption on this world-wide scale of the Greek speech there inevitably followed the general acceptance of Greek ideals and customs.

### *Greek Colonization.*

Another potent agency in furthering Alexander's design was the planting of Hellenistic cities amongst the alien races whom he had vanquished in war. He recognized that there were other bonds besides those of law and order by which his universal empire might be cemented and held together. The general adoption of the Greek language he wished to see followed up by the

<sup>1</sup> The *κοινή* of the Septuagint and New Testament.

<sup>2</sup> Angus, *The Environment of Early Christianity*, p. 211.

spread of Greek civilization among all the Oriental races, so that he might reign over a world at once organized upon a Hellenistic basis and permeated by the Hellenistic spirit. Fortunately for his great project, the Greeks possessed in a remarkable degree the colonizing instinct. Unlike the Egyptians, whose primeval civilization never extended beyond the Nile valley, they had always manifested a tendency to spread themselves abroad. Even before this epoch Greek colonists had settled in Western Asia and on the coasts of the Black Sea. Driven from their territory by the Spartans, the Achæans and Minyæ—the Dorians (from Argos) and Pelasgi of the *Odyssey* (xix. 175 ff.)—had colonized Melos and Thera as early as B.C. 800. Passing to Crete, they settled at Cnossus, the city of Minos, and also at Lyctus in the north and at Gortyn in the south. Religiously and otherwise they were largely influenced by their new surroundings, the impression of which was through them transmitted to the Greeks generally. Their chief god Zeus had a Cretan origin; and they adopted from the Phœnicians, already settled in these islands, their alphabet and system of weights and measures. The Greek race thus came at once to occupy a larger territory and to lead a larger life. Nor did the tide of emigration cease to flow until the choicest parts of Anatolia, the islands of the Ægean, and the western coast of the Peloponnesus, were colonized. The necessity of defending their new possessions led them to become increasingly skilful in the art of navigation, while their constant contact with highly civilized foreigners proved an intellectual stimulus of the most pronounced type. In Italy also their philosophy, literature, and art, as

well as their recreations, were greatly in vogue. They were fast superseding the Phœnicians in the control of the Mediterranean, and have left a deeper mark on the life of the world than their Semitic predecessors. The Greek race was thus peculiarly fitted to carry out the declared policy of Alexander. His extraordinary programme coincided exactly with their own inborn tastes and characteristics. What they had already initiated he introduced on such a scale that ere long all the world was opened for trade, and the remotest regions felt the influence of the new culture.

By way of realizing his great idea of Hellenizing the world Alexander went to work systematically, and arranged that Greek colonists should everywhere follow his army. Of these many became settlers in existing cities, while in other cases new towns were built and more or less occupied by Greeks. The inhabitants enjoyed self-government with respect to internal affairs, and had full freedom of speech. Of the seventy cities, all called by his name,<sup>1</sup> which Alexander founded, not a few were intended to be emporiums of trade, like the Alexandria which still exists. They were limited in size. Built on a uniform plan with two leading arteries intersecting each other at right angles, and the other streets running parallel to these thoroughfares, they exhibited the regularity of feature belonging to modern cities of the most approved type. They all contained special memorials of the conquering hero to whom they owed their origin. It was Alexander's persistent policy to discourage rural life, and to mass the people in towns,

<sup>1</sup> Still traceable in such names as Kandahār, Secunderabad, Samarkand.

so that the fusion of nationalities might be accelerated. Coming into close and constant contact with each other as residents under the same municipal and military system, moving in an atmosphere of Greek letters and culture, having occasion to enter into commercial transactions with all and sundry, natives and colonists alike were thrown into a new social environment, and met upon a certain footing of equality. These causes, added to the court influence of the period, led to the elimination of the distinctively national in every quarter of the empire. Under the flowing tide of Hellenism, with the two notable exceptions of Egypt and Judæa, native customs were submerged, and racial peculiarities obliterated. It needed only a short period of intermarriage to make the fusion complete.

When not mere military outposts, these Hellenistic cities were missionary centres for the propagation of Greek ideas and customs. Extending as they did over the whole of Western Asia, they served in a remarkable degree the purpose for which they were founded. Under the successors of Alexander, with the exception perhaps of the lower strata in the population, this wide region became completely Hellenized—surely a wonderful tribute to the power of Greek civilization. In pursuance of their master's policy, and adopting the same principle of nomenclature, the Diadochoi built a large number of towns bearing the names of their respective founders. Thus there were several Antiochs, Seleucias, etc. This process went on all over Asia, until Greece could scarcely supply the new centres with colonists.<sup>1</sup>

Obviously, therefore, the impulse given by Alexan-

<sup>1</sup> See Note 3, p. 380.



der's conquests to the propagation of Hellenism did not cease with the division of his empire. Rather did the new leaven thus introduced into the social life of the period do its work all the faster that it was done in sections. Several new monarchies now shared the lordship of the world, but our interest centres mainly round the two dynasties of the Ptolemies in Egypt and of the Seleucidæ in Syria. Owing to its geographical position Palestine became the battlefield of these rival powers. After changing hands repeatedly, it remained in possession of the Ptolemies for a whole century (till B.C. 203), during which time the process of Hellenization went peacefully forward. It was then merged in the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, who pursued the same policy, although with less tact, and less pronounced success. Yet even so it took all the strength of the Semitic civilization and all the heroism of the Hebrew religion to roll back the well-nigh resistless wave of Hellenistic culture.

How are we to explain the extraordinary results of the impact of the Greeks upon the ancient world in general? The answer is simply that they thoroughly understood their business. This wonderful people reduced colonization almost to a science. In their hands it was no mere haphazard off-loading of the superfluous refuse of an over-populated state, but the planting upon new soil of all the elements of a harmonious commonwealth. The emigrants who went forth from their shores always included a certain proportion of the educated class, and even of the aristocracy—men of light and leading, who possessed the power of *adaptability*, and could inspire confidence. The Greeks were fully alive

to the importance of this, and herein lay the secret of their success.

*The Attempt to provide a Philosophy of Life.*

A third important factor in the world's Hellenization was the attempt to provide the race with a philosophy of life. Not that this was a social question; it was a problem that called for individual solution. Plato and Aristotle had taught the Greeks how to perform the duties of citizenship, but now that they were no longer citizens in the old sense they needed to formulate a scheme of life suited to the new conditions. The question which thus came to confront every soul was: "On what principle shall I regulate my life so as to make the most of it? Which way does wisdom lie?" The discussion of this problem gave rise to conflicting schools of thought. All were agreed concerning the individualistic ethical end in view, but differences arose regarding the means by which it is to be attained. The two leading philosophical sects to be taken account of here are the Stoics and the Epicureans, and their systems and ideals will form the subject of the following chapter.

## CHAPTER V.

### PHILOSOPHICAL SECTS OF THE STOICS AND EPICUREANS.

#### *The Epicurean Ideal.*

DENYING the distinction between mind and matter which had been asserted by the older philosophy, Epicurus (B.C. 342-270) declares all that exists to be corporeal ( $\tau\acute{o} \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota \sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ ), and capable of being felt. He conceives an infinite number of indivisible atoms as moving perpetually in illimitable space. The human soul is only a refined species of body. To refer the phenomena of nature to Divine action is little better than to adopt a blind fatalism. It is right to worship the gods, but only as ideals of perfect blessedness. Man has nothing to hope or fear from them. In our actions we are not the creatures of necessity ; we can determine the course we shall take. Independent alike of the gods and of fatality, man can sever his relations with all that is external to himself, and become entirely self-centred. This indeed is the ideal condition ; only thus can any one become a sage and "live like a god among men." There is no future life ; the death of the body ends all.

This system is based upon a thoroughly materialistic view of nature and of man. It makes sensation and feeling the ultimate test of reality. An object is real in proportion to the distinctness with which it impresses

itself upon our consciousness. Sensation is beyond criticism. The only function which reason can legitimately exercise here is that of relating sensations to each other. So soon as it begins to co-ordinate itself with, or substitute itself for, what we actively feel, it becomes a prolific source of error. Upon these principles was founded the Epicurean theory of life. Since everything is corporeal, and affects us only through the senses, conduct must be based upon feeling. The true province of ethics accordingly is to enlighten men with respect to the real nature of their feelings. To go wrong here is to build upon a false foundation ; to make sure work here is to find the way to happiness. It was the merit of Epicureanism that it emphasized the importance of right action as contrasted with mere intellectual knowledge of truth. In the metaphysical teaching of Plato and Aristotle much had been done to instruct men how to arrive at a right judgement, but not nearly enough attention had been paid to the still more important matter of right conduct. There had undoubtedly been a tendency to subordinate the moral to the intellectual, and while the philosophers had taught their disciples how to speculate, their systems did little to secure either happiness or virtue. People were weary of abstract reasoning, and found it a relief to be thrown back upon the feelings common to their own experience. In this way many were led to look in the direction of Epicureanism.

As a theory of life the system of Epicurus was neither scientific nor utilitarian. He had no appreciation for the regular succession and natural connexion of facts so dear to the modern evolutionist. It was his habit of

mind to look at things apart rather than in the aggregate. Of the grandeur of the solar system he had so little notion that he rebuked the astronomers for suggesting that the heavenly bodies are really larger than they appear to us. Nor does Epicureanism profess to be founded on utility. What it has in view is the happiness of the individual. Pleasure it declares to be the chief good in life. But here it is necessary to avoid a very common misunderstanding. Although the Epicureans held pleasure to be the highest good, it is a mistake to regard them as advocates of mere sensual gratification. In their view the ideal state is one of perfect tranquillity, or freedom from bodily pain and mental perturbation (*ἀταραξία*). It is a happiness sanctioned by reason, and arrived at through the exercise of a wise prudence. Feeling tells us what is good, but reason must act as a check upon natural instinct, and determine whether in view of the consequences it is safe to pluck the fruit which is pleasant to the eye. It may decide that tranquillity of mind and body will be promoted by leaving it alone. But how is this state of harmony with self to be reached? By living in a kind of vacuum where no limitations can be imposed by religion or culture, by the family or the state. All such bonds Epicurus regards as subversive of independence. "The sage," he says, "will not marry and beget children, nor will he take part in state affairs." At the same time he deprecates anything like cynical or stoical indifference to others, and redeems his system from the charge of utter selfishness by his hearty commendation of friendship. And there is certainly a deep truth in his dictum that "we cannot live pleasantly without living wisely and nobly and righteously."

*The Stoic Ideal.*

To a certain extent the Stoics shared the tenets of the Epicureans. They agreed with them in holding as against Plato and Aristotle that only body exists. But even in their system of "physics," upon which their psychology and ethics are based, important points of difference emerge. According to their conception, the world is a conglomerate of forces controlled by a Reason that permeates the universe, *i.e.* God. That matter is pervaded by force is not only a distinctively Stoic doctrine, but the keystone of their entire philosophy, which is essentially pantheistic. In their view God, the world, and the individual human soul are bound up in one whole. By the varying tension of the one all-pervading substance they explain the whole procession of the universe. While the Epicureans do not account for the initial movements of their atoms, the Stoics by holding tension to be an essential attribute of matter are able to find a reason for everything in nature. In their psychology also the two systems are at variance. According to the Epicureans, the body is the warden of the soul atoms; according to the Stoics, it is the soul that holds the body together. For Stoicism there are no "parts" of the soul. As it is corporeal, so also it is a unity. It stands related to man as God to the world. At birth it is a blank but impressionable tablet, and knowledge is gained through experience and reflexion. These differences as regards physics and psychology are necessarily accompanied by sharp divergence in the sphere of ethics also. As a practical system Stoicism

laid the main emphasis here. According to its adherent Posidonius, "Logic is the shell, physics the white, and ethics the yoke." As possessing the distinctive faculty of reason it behoves man to live conformably to reason, *i.e.* in harmony with nature, and in co-operation with God or the Reason immanent in the universe. Whether or not the individual will fulfil the requirements of the universal law and attain to a really harmonious, rational, and consistent life, must lie with himself. In the case of children and animals who follow the "uncorrupted impulses" of nature, not pleasure, as the Epicureans contended, but self-preservation is at the root of all instinctive motion. Where reason has been developed it can and ought to control the passions; animalism should not be allowed to get the mastery. Plato and the Old Academy had contended for the regulation of the passions, but the philosophy of the Stoa demanded their extinction. Its proposition was that the affections introduce into a man's life an element of disorder which can be counteracted only by "right (*i.e.* rigid and unbending) reason." Through the growth of the latter the soul is made perfect, and life flows on like a placid river. Virtue means the recognition of a rational order in the universe working itself out in providence, and the bringing of all impulses and acts into complete submission thereto. Only in this way can man reach that harmony of the soul in which true happiness consists.<sup>1</sup> When reason becomes "right," the result is external harmony and internal good. To attain to such harmony with self and with nature, to manifest a calm indifference under all circumstances, is the Stoic ideal of

<sup>1</sup> See Note 4, p. 381.



life.<sup>1</sup> In order to realize it the wise man must withdraw from society with its cares and distractions, and live within himself. He must also uproot the passions and inure himself to ascetic hardness. Only thus can he become "absolutely perfect, lord of himself, and master of the world."

Are there then for the Stoic no social relations at all? On the contrary, upon this subject he represents a very advanced standpoint. The society to which he belongs is the cosmopolitan society of rational beings. In Zeno's *Republic* there is shadowed forth a state wide as humanity itself, without nationality or anything that savours of it, without schools or temples, and even without family life. And in the circumstances of the age there was much to give an impetus to the development of this idea. It was favoured on the one hand by the decline of the Greek city-state, and on the other by the rise of extensive kingdoms under despotic government subsequent to Alexander's campaigns. It is easy to understand what an enlargement of horizon was thus brought to the minds of multitudes previously accustomed to absorption in the petty politics of their own locality. The ordinary distinction of Greek and barbarian vanished before the conception of the brotherhood of reason.

Although Stoicism was but a nature religion, it was not devoid of the true spirit of piety. It saw God everywhere, and proclaimed the necessity of inward purity as clearly as it maintained the worthlessness of outward

<sup>1</sup> The Stoic "had two havens of refuge—the universe and his own soul—both quite beyond the reach of the oppressor."—T. R. Glover, *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, p. 38 (7th ed.).

rites. On the ground that divinity must be predicated of God's manifestations (*e.g.* the celestial bodies, the forces of nature, and even heroes), the Stoics nevertheless gave a certain sanction to polytheism. They also applied the allegorical method to the mythology and legendary poetry of Greece, and made room for the practice of divination by making it a link in the chain of causation.

In the systems of these two schools we have the best guidance which the pre-Christian heathen world could give with reference to the wise conduct of life. But the principles which they embodied, when weighed in the balances of a sound criticism, were soon found wanting. The Epicurean ideal could be realized only in a social vacuum. If happiness belongs exclusively to the man who has discovered how to fence himself off from every disturbing influence, obviously the "wise" must ever be a very small company. But even assuming that men had the leisure to pursue the unruffled calm to which this system points as the only path to happiness and virtue, it may fairly be asked whether it is possible so to seclude oneself from the world as to attain it, and whether the independence so reached would be of any value. Apart from a social environment the development of individuality is inevitably arrested, for the simple reason that it is thereby deprived of the only soil in which it can take root and arrive at maturity. The votaries of this philosophy "make a desert and call it peace." This self-centred happiness is a pure delusion. Adherents of this school were following a mere will-o'-the-wisp, and the gradual perception of this led many of them in despair to plunge into sensuality and even to take their own lives.

The Stoic ideal is founded upon a definite conception

of nature as a process of reason knowing no limit and no change. To understand nature is to live according to nature ; to apprehend the universe as one orderly whole is to attain to independent self-control. This position can be reached only through the uprooting of the passions, and in order to this one must withdraw himself from those relations by which men are usually entangled and led into action. But for most, if not indeed for all, this is an impossible ideal. Who can thus retire into himself ? And even were it possible, what kind of self is there left for one to retire into when all the duties and instincts and interests of life have been eliminated ? The Stoic who by parting with everything that constitutes life has arrived at harmony with the world-reason becomes a victim to utter despair, from which the sole means of egress is suicide. Absolute self-obliteration can of course be reached only through death, and thus the final goal of the " wise," after his toilsome efforts have landed him in indifference and despair, is extinction pure and simple. That the worthiest life should lead to such an issue is surely the climax of absurdity. Stoic philosophy may have been a useful lash for many human frailties, but as a gospel it is an utter failure.<sup>1</sup> Its vaunted conception of the perfectibility of the " wise " was never realized in practice. To be told that the ills of life are the inevitable consequence of an unalterable

<sup>1</sup> More generous is the estimate of T. R. Glover, who, speaking of *later* Stoicism, says: " It was avowedly a rule of life rather than a system of speculation ; and it was more, for the doctrine of the *Spermatikos Logos* (the Generative Reason) gave a new meaning to conduct and opened up a new and rational way to God. Thus Stoicism, while still a philosophy, was pre-eminently a religion, and even a gospel—Good News of emancipation from the evil of the world and of union with the Divine."—*Op. cit.* p. 56.

chain of events is but cold comfort to any sufferer ; and to be further told that in order to accommodate himself to circumstances he must root out his passions does nothing to furnish him with an inspiring ideal. On the contrary, it can only throw contempt upon life, and make it a weariness. It is the singular merit of Christianity that it points not to the destruction, but to the transformation of the passions as the path of wisdom for man. In the region of ethics, Stoicism, while having much in common with Christianity, failed in this, that though it could indicate man's duty, it could not enable him to fulfil it. Christianity, on the other hand, not only sets before him the highest ideals, but also supplies him with the power to attain them. "Stoicism is like the dry bones which Ezekiel saw in his vision, the frames of men without the life. Christianity is like those bodies after they had been endowed with beauty, and strength, and vital energy, by His power to whom alone it belongs to pronounce the decree, 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' " <sup>1</sup>

The Greeks had already prepared the way for Christianity by demonstrating the inadequacy of the human reason to formulate a satisfactory doctrine of God and of salvation. In this respect the later philosophy of the Stoics made no difference. Still "the world by wisdom knew not God." Clever, learned, and argumentative, the Greek philosophers had on this field at all events employed the means of knowledge without result. They failed to furnish men with a satisfying faith. Freedom

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Bryant, *The Mutual Influence of Christianity and the Stoic School*, p. 91.

had led to bitter strife in the city republics of Greece, and civic morality had been on the wane. When at length they lost their independence and became merged in the Macedonian empire, the Greeks had nothing in the shape of a religion to fall back upon. In this they present a striking contrast to the Jews. The Greek mind, in fact, was never intensely religious, and criticism had pulverized the old traditions. This gifted race of sophists and dialecticians was spiritually helpless. With all their searching they could not find out God, and therefore could not solve the problem of perfect blessedness for man.

## CHAPTER VI.

### PLACE OF HELLENISTIC CULTURE IN THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION: HELLENISM IN EGYPT.

#### *The City of Alexandria.*

THE most typical and important cities of the new era were Alexandria and Antioch, the capitals of Egypt and Syria respectively. They sprang up as if by a magician's wand, and became the leading seats of trade and culture in the East. In them the pulse of Hellenism continued to beat strongly and steadily. Alexandria in particular attained to a position of primacy as a cosmopolitan community, inhabited, if not by a new mixed race, at all events by men of different races in daily contact with each other. It was the meeting-place of Orientals, Egyptians, Greeks, and Jews. In its ideal position for trading purposes the genius of its founder detected the sure guarantee of future prosperity. Having chosen the site, the great Macedonian appointed as architect the famous Deinocrates, who had rebuilt the temple of Diana at Ephesus. As laid out by this expert, the city consisted of parallel streets crossed by other similar streets at right angles, and filled the narrow belt of land lying between Lake Mareotis and the Mediterranean. In respect of efficient business methods and enlightened municipal enterprise it took a foremost place. Its well-

lighted streets, imposing colonnades, and thorough commercial organization gave to it the aspect almost of a modern city. Under the tolerant and enlightened sway of the earlier Ptolemies Alexandria flourished not only as a centre of commerce, but also as a seat of learning. It declined considerably under the baneful régime of the later representatives of the house of Lagos, but as an imperial city under the Romans it regained its former prosperity. In the third century of our era, with more than half a million inhabitants, Alexandria was reckoned after Rome the foremost city in the world. It was divided into three main districts, occupied respectively by Egyptians, Greeks (including Macedonians), and Jews. In the Egyptian quarter (Rakōtis) on the West, was the Serapeum (Sarapieion), or temple of the god Serapis, where was housed a portion of the great Royal Library containing the world's rarest literary treasures, carefully arranged and catalogued by scholarly hands. The finest part of the city was the Brucheion or Greek quarter, to which distinction was lent by the magnificent palace of the Ptolemies, the law courts, the temple of the Cæsars, the library proper, and the museum or university. The Museum, with its porticoes, refectory, and lecture-rooms, was a great royal foundation for the diffusion of knowledge; and so ardently prosecuted was the study of grammar, philology, and the exact sciences generally, that there took place something like a revival of the classical period on the banks of the Nile. There arose a school of critics and literati—"sinecure fellows" (*ἀτελεῖς φιλόσοφοι*) under court patronage—who lived in learned leisure, and enjoyed congenial society and an adequate pension. While supreme in the department of



scholarship, the Greeks also filled many of the leading civil and military posts, and were the rivals of the Jews in commerce. The Macedonians naturally asserted themselves as the dominant race, and formed a "military aristocracy," which assumed the rôle of proclaiming new kings, and in the case of minors the right to exercise the governing power. A considerable portion of the city was occupied by Jewish settlers who streamed in their thousands to Alexander's new foundation. The Delta quarter especially was given over to them,<sup>1</sup> and they soon got control of the shipping trade on the Nile and the Mediterranean. From the Greeks they also learned to become clever artificers in gold, silver, iron, etc. They were ruled by an "ethnarch" of their own, and enjoyed certain privileges conferred by Alexander himself. Apparently, however, in spite of frequent statements to the contrary, these fell short of full civic rights, and for the most part probably consisted of exemptions granted on account of their religion.<sup>2</sup>

*What we owe to the Hellenists of Alexandria.*

To the Hellenists of this period, associated as they mainly were with Alexandria, the world owes much. Although on Alexandrian soil scholarship and criticism were more in evidence than originality, it was no merely mechanical age that produced the idylls of Theocritus, with their fresh and charming pictures of rural life.

<sup>1</sup> Philo, in *Flacc.*, 6.

<sup>2</sup> That they had precisely the same rights (*ισοπολιτεία*) as Macedonian and Greek settlers (Josephus, *c. Apion*, ii. 4, followed by Schürer, *H. J. P.*, ii. ii. p. 270 ff.), seems questionable in view of the more reliable testimony of Polybius.

Every reader of the Roman poets knows that with the single exception of Horace they were more indebted to the Alexandrians than to the greater authors of the classical age. Vergil's *Georgics*, for example, is modelled upon the *Diosemeia* of the Cilician Aratus,<sup>1</sup>—a didactic work upon the weather, for the use of farmers. In the Septuagint, or Greek translation of the Old Testament, a product of the reign of Ptolemy II. Philadelphus, the Hellenists of Alexandria transmitted to the world an invaluable treasure, no extant Hebrew text being of anything like equal antiquity. That huge department of literature which comes under the category of fiction, and of which the romance of love forms the core, is also of Hellenistic origin.<sup>2</sup> From the same source, later on, came the religious philosophy of Neoplatonism, which has so largely influenced subsequent thought. In the domain of art, as in literature, the achievements of Hellenism were of no mean order. That this applies to music may be gathered from these lines of Theocritus in praise of King Ptolemy :

None entered e'er the sacred lists of song,  
Whose lips could breathe sweet music, but he gained  
Fair guerdon at the hand of Ptolemy.

More positive evidence is furnished, however, by the statement of Polybius<sup>3</sup> that among the Arcadians "the daily practice of music was made compulsory not only to children, but to youths up to thirty years of

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by St. Paul in Acts 17<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> "The notion came in from the East, and is first mentioned in the fragments of Chares of Mitylene, a companion of Alexander in the East."—Mahaffy, *Progress of Hellenism*, etc., p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> iv. 20 f.

age." While ascribing the kindliness of the people of Arcadia to the refining influence of this art, the historian attributes the lawlessness of the Cynæthans, who inhabited the wildest parts of that region, to their entire neglect of musical training. The same thing holds good with reference to architecture, painting,<sup>1</sup> and sculpture. The ornate Corinthian style, of which the colonnades at Palmyra form such a noble example, is purely Hellenistic. That Alexander "refused to sit to any sculptor but Lysippus, to any painter but Apelles," implies the possession on their part of high artistic powers. But the artists of the period did not confine themselves to executing portraits in oils or marble; they were constantly producing ideal heads and allegorical figures. Thus, for instance, there was a famous picture of *Calumny*, inspired by the painter's own experience of its dangerous fruits in bringing upon him the displeasure of King Ptolemy I. Sculpture is represented by real works of genius in the Venus of Melos and the Niké of Samothrace (a figure of Victory), both of which are now in the Louvre at Paris; in the Apollo (Belvidere) and Artemis of the Vatican; and in the exquisitely beautiful tomb of Sidon,<sup>2</sup> now the gem of the museum at Constantinople.

It was, however, in the realm of pure and practical science that Hellenism chiefly excelled. Alexandria gave us Euclid, the famous geometrician, who lived under the first Ptolemy, and even if this gift stood alone, it would compel acknowledgment. But it is only one of many. Euclid was followed by Conon of Samos, who as

<sup>1</sup> See Note 5, p. 381.

<sup>2</sup> Probably erected in honour of Philocles, King of Sidon, and commander of the fleet under the first Ptolemy.

mathematician and astronomer taught at the royal school of Euergetes from B.C. 247-222, and wrote seven books in which he embodied the results of the observation of eclipses by the Chaldæans. Archimedes of Syracuse was the pupil of Conon, and rose to fame by his scientific labours and achievements: he was equally at home in astronomy, pure geometry, civil engineering, and mechanical invention. Many treatises from his pen have come down to us, but many also have been lost. Eratosthenes (B.C. 276-194), keeper of the royal library at Alexandria, distinguished himself as a chronologist, invented an appliance for determining the obliquity of the ecliptic, and was the first to estimate on a scientific basis the magnitude of the earth. Apollonius of Perga, another Alexandrian student, wrote a treatise on conic sections, which gave him a high place among geometers; he also did the work of a pioneer in wedding geometry to astronomy, to the great gain of both. Hipparchus, who observed in Rhodes from B.C. 60, and made a catalogue of 1080 stars, takes precedence of all Greek astronomers. To him we owe the discovery of the precession of the equinoxes, the invention of trigonometry, and other valuable services to science. The Greek papyri of the Fayyum show that a far simpler alphabetic notation was in use than that employed in Attic reckonings, and that by means of it the most intricate calculations were worked out. Although it belongs to a later date, it is also worthy of mention that in the second century A.D. Ptolemy, an Alexandrian observer, made a digest of Greek astronomy in his *Almagest*, and published a system of geography and a collection of maps which remained a standard work

for more than a thousand years. These attainments in science are in themselves sufficient to redeem the Hellenistic age from the reproach of mediocrity.

*Failure of Hellenism to fuse the Greek and Egyptian Races.*

It is a remarkable fact that while it was in Egypt that Hellenism reached its height and put forth its fairest blossom, it failed to bring about on any appreciable scale the fusion of the Greek and Egyptian races. The founding or refounding of the Serapeum<sup>1</sup> at Alexandria by Ptolemy I. Soter in concert with the Greek priest Timotheus clearly had this end in view. Moreover, this monarch's naval supremacy, and the foreign service thereby entailed, must have enabled many natives to acquire some knowledge of Greek as well as insight into more efficient business methods than those in vogue on the banks of the Nile. Yet the two nationalities remained apart.

Ptolemy's greatest and most enduring service to Hellenistic culture was the part he played in founding the Museum and Library of Alexandria. Although the credit of this is often given to his successor, it stands on record<sup>2</sup> that he tried to persuade the celebrated Stilpo to migrate from Megara to Egypt. Theophrastus and Menander likewise failed him<sup>3</sup>; Demetrius Phalereus,

<sup>1</sup> The name, of which the earliest form is 'Oσίραρις, is a compound of Osiris and Apis (Clem. Alex., *Protreptikos*, ch. iv.), the Apis bull passing into Osiris after death. It appears probable that Ptolemy chose for his purpose the site of a former Serapeum at Rakōtis.

<sup>2</sup> Diog., *Lib.* ii., c. 11.

<sup>3</sup> While the savants of Athens could not be induced to transfer themselves to Egypt, the likelihood is that it was always possible to draft distinguished men to the Museum from the famous Greek settlement of Cyrene.

who was compelled to leave Athens for other reasons, he easily secured. Ptolemy had evidently conceived the idea of establishing in the new Egyptian capital a great philosophical and educational institute, equipped like the Athenian schools and governed by the State. Thus what was the practical equivalent of a modern university was already being evolved on Egyptian soil. There is, however, nothing to indicate that it was intended to propagate Hellenism among the natives, to whom in fact it remained quite a foreign cause. Unfortunately, apart from the fact that its honorary president was a Greek priest, and that a librarian had charge of its literary treasures, its history is very obscure. As a school of Hellenism, however, it bore rich fruit, and, as we have seen, furnished the world with much that is of abiding value.

Outside of Alexandria there appears to have been still less fusion of Greeks and Egyptians. The two races were as oil and water : they would not amalgamate. That divine honours were conferred on Ptolemy from the Cyclades and Rhodes does not imply that the sovereignty was based upon Greek ideas, since the deification of Hellenistic kings was quite in accordance with the Syrian and Egyptian practice. Neither did the transference by Ptolemy of a statue of Zeus-Hades, or god of death, from Sinope to Rakōtis, of which there is clear evidence, amount to anything more than the fusion of a Greek with an ancient Egyptian god, perhaps with a view to the closer unification of the older and newer Alexandria. The fact that the new Hellenism roused no opposition on the part of the Egyptian priesthood shows that it was not unduly pressed upon the native

population, and that it was no part of this monarch's religious policy to deal harshly with them. From the early days of his satrapy indeed Ptolemy had been conciliatory towards the national feeling, and had restored part of the great temple of Luxor. The theory that his empire was regulated according to Greek principles is inconsistent with his open practice of polygamy—a thing obnoxious to the Greeks. It is also noteworthy that, unlike others of the Diadochoi, he founded very few new cities. His chief foundation of this sort was Ptolemais in Upper Egypt, where he was worshipped as Soter god. Archæological research on the spot has yielded very meagre results; but we know that this city could boast of a guild of Dionysiac artists, and had its senate and public assembly according to the Hellenic custom. Alexandria, on the other hand, appears to have had no constitution of the Hellenic type, though certain rights, the exact nature of which, however, is not clear, were conferred on those not ranking as Macedonians, that is, Greeks, Jews, and natives. The civic authority was vested in a governor with a staff of officials. In Egypt generally, as previously under the dispositions made by Alexander himself, wealth and power remained the monopoly of the Greek.

There are clear indications of the naturalization of Greek culture in Egypt under Ptolemy II. Philadelphus, who, although the youngest son, succeeded his father in B.C. 284. The observance of a Five-Years' Feast of the Bacchanalian type in honour of his predecessor, the embellishment of the Hellenion at Naucratis, the distinctly Hellenistic settlement at Fayyum, and the steps he took to enhance the literary glory of Alexandria, all



seem to point in this direction. And although the story in the *Letter of Aristeas* is certainly spurious, it is also probable enough that the Greek translation of the Old Testament, thence known as the Septuagint, was commenced during the reign of this king. Yet, in spite of his pronounced Hellenistic proclivities, he must have come to an understanding with the Egyptian priesthood, for he enriched the temple of Mendes, married his sister, the divine Arsinoë Philadelphos, began the series of Ptolemaic temples so industriously carried on by the dynasty, and had the old records of Egypt translated by the high priest Manetho. Significant also is the fact that the courts of the natives were not suppressed in favour of the Greek courts which were set up, although the latter were largely used as courts of appeal. So far from fostering the fusion of the two races, Philadelphus appears rather to have deliberately aimed at the severance of Greek and Egyptian culture. In view of all the evidence it is certainly safe to say that as a rule the two nationalities stood aloof from each other, without any effort on his part to bring them together. The first and second Ptolemies indeed were concerned with two things only—the consolidation of their military strength, and the making of Alexandria into a second Athens.

At first Ptolemy III. Euergetes was mainly concerned to pose as an aggressive warrior, but the strongly contrasted point of view reflected in the almost Kaiser-like tone of the Adule inscription and the five years' later decree of Canopus<sup>1</sup> seems to indicate that the quondam boastful Greek conqueror had developed into a peaceful

<sup>1</sup> For an English translation of the text of both, see Mahaffy, *The Ptolemaic Dynasty*, ch. iv.

administrator and guardian of the internal affairs of his kingdom. During his reign, and apparently with his sanction, there set in a strong reaction against Hellenistic fashions. Among the many Egyptian temples initiated or improved by this monarch the most remarkable is that at Edfu, which it took two centuries to complete. Like the other Ptolemies, he deferred much to the native priests, and by diplomatic arts and gifts knew how to restrain the racial ardour of the Greeks. Recent discovery, however, has elicited the fact that in at least one case, namely, at Ramleh, near Alexandria, his reign witnessed the founding of a Greek temple, the dedication being as follows: "On behalf of King Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy and Arsinoë, Brother Gods, and of Queen Berenike, wife and sister of the king, Benefactor Gods, Kleon and Antipater, priests of Zeus (have dedicated) the altars and sacred enclosure, and the land appertaining to it, to the Brother Gods, Olympian Zeus, and Zeus the god of confederacies." There is also a pylon of Ptolemy III. at Karnak, on which his effigy is said to be engraved in a semi-Greek dress. The Museum of Alexandria reached the heyday of its prosperity under this king, whose scientific tastes were very marked, and who, while kindly disposed towards the native Egyptians, curiously enough made no attempt to learn their language.

According to Polybius, Ptolemy IV. Philopator was a feeble and worthless character, but in view of his popularity both in Athens and in Alexandria, and of his apparent fulfilment of the obligations undertaken by his father to the Rhodians after the calamitous earthquake which desolated that island, this verdict should

perhaps be accepted with caution. The story in 3 Maccabees that he profaned the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem, though legendary, may be regarded as showing that it was his policy to curb Jewish influence in Egypt. To some extent his sympathies were Hellenistic, for he not only supported the activities of the Museum, but actually wrote a tragedy entitled *Adonis*, and erected a temple to Homer. According to 3 Maccabees he was also devoted to Dionysos. Dedications to him at Lesbos and other places further testify to his Hellenistic sympathies. But all this did not prevent him from befriending—while at the same time, perhaps in order to extortion, persecuting—the national religion. He completed the temple at Aswân, and engraved his name on the wall of Edfu alongside of pictorial representations of its divinities. Towards the close of his reign dissatisfaction with the Greek dominion led to a rebellion in the upper provinces.

The coronation of the next king, Ptolemy v. Epiphanes, was celebrated in Hellenistic fashion at Alexandria, but probably afterwards at Memphis also with Egyptian rites. The decree of Memphis speaks of him as “a god sprung from a god and goddesses,” and was no doubt intended to conciliate the priesthood and to quell the rising revolt, which, however, was not suppressed until the nineteenth year of his reign, when his name was inscribed on the temple at Edfu. This Ptolemy instituted a system of titles, which rich natives could, and were perhaps obliged to purchase, but whether these were of Greek or Egyptian origin it is hard to say. Epiphanes found himself in financial straits owing to his employment of mercenaries against the Syrian Antiochus,

and seriously endangered his throne by arming the natives, who in their rage at the avarice of the Greeks were like to turn their weapons against him. By prudently attaching himself, however, to the national movement which had set in strongly against Hellenism, he contrived to seat himself securely on the Egyptian throne.

Ptolemy VI. Philometor was proclaimed king in B.C. 173. It is noteworthy that in the dispute with the Syrians regarding the possession of Coele-Syria the cause of Egypt was represented by Greek ambassadors only. Many papyri of the period show that it had become a prevalent custom to call natives by, as well as to rededicate temples to, Egyptian deities bearing Greek names. In numerous dedications to this king in Syene and Lower Nubia the identification of Egyptian with Hellenic gods (Ammon = Chnoubis, Hera = Satis, etc.) is a uniform feature. The erection during his reign of the Jewish temple of Leontopolis (near Heliopolis) is interesting as indicating that the resident Jews had leanings towards Egyptian Hellenism. Philometor's building activity seems to have been confined to Upper Egypt, and in this we may detect a desire to gratify the natives and an atonement for the neglect of his predecessors. The temple at Debôt is remarkable for its combination of a Greek inscription of Philometor and his wife with records of a Nubian king sacrificing to Egyptian gods (Isis, Horus, etc.). It is also instructive to note that many papyri of Memphis give evidence of racial fusion which is absent from the Petrie papyri of the previous century; yet collisions between Greeks and natives were distinctly on the increase. The truth seems to be

that if there was real fusion it was not that of Egyptian and Greek, but that of Macedonian and even of Persian with Greek. So far from the Egyptians becoming Hellenized, the Ptolemies themselves had practically become Egyptian.

Ptolemy VII. Physkon, who rose to the throne by murdering the legitimate heir (the infant Eupator), pursued a strongly Egyptian policy. While conforming to the practice of Philometor in admitting Jews to the higher offices of state, his sympathies went out especially to the native Egyptians. In every part of the country he erected temples to its gods, though few evidences of his building exist north of Thebes. On the stone of *Sehêle* native names, alike of gods and of their worshippers, are interspersed with Greek names—a circumstance which makes it difficult to determine the nationality of persons mentioned in papyri of the period. While, however, Greeks undoubtedly had native names, it was seemingly a rare thing for Egyptians to assume Greek names. On the other hand, the native population increasingly resorted to the Greek courts, even where the matters in dispute were connected with their own religious customs. So pronouncedly Egyptian and anti-Hellenistic was the attitude of Physkon that the literati of the Museum forsook it, refusing to return even when—probably at the instigation of Scipio—they were urged to do so, and Greek influence in Egypt was ever after at a discount. Hellenism was fast transferring its headquarters to Rome.

In the time of Ptolemy VIII. Lathyros, Greek names occur as a rule only when high officials are in evidence. While the monuments show that this king was not behind

others of his dynasty in the building of Egyptian temples, they tell us little of the Hellenistic side of things during his reign. There are, however, four inscriptions which seem to indicate the continued prevalence of Greek influence in the Fayyum. Of these inscriptions Mahaffy says: "Two of them give the limits of a sacred enclosure dedicated to the great god Sobk (Souchos) by the *epheboi* of two several schools (called *heresies*). The Greek notion of prolonged education, ending in a philosophical training, which they now preferred to call a *heresy* to calling it a school, seems at home in this isolated corner of Hellenism. The god worshipped is Egyptian, the people concerned have Greek names and habits. The other two commemorate the endowment of the temple of the great god Soknopaios (at Dimêh). . . . Here again the chief officer of the nome is Lysanias, the *œconomus* Aniketos, the secretary Apollonios, son of Iscurion—all Greek names. . . . The facts are too few to enable us to draw any inference. If we had other evidence of a Hellenistic reaction in this reign, we might cite these inscriptions to show that, in contrast to the high native officials we know in the Thebaid at the opening of Soter II.'s reign, we have nothing but Greeks here. But then this province was clearly more Greek in population than the rest." <sup>1</sup>

We have scarcely any papyri of the reign of Ptolemy XI. Auletes reflecting the inner condition of Egypt. He added to the Isis of Philæ, gave the finishing touches to the great temple of Edfu, and either completed or adorned many other temples, although, perhaps for reasons of economy, he does not seem to

<sup>1</sup> *The Ptolemaic Dynasty*, p. 219 ff.

have wholly built any. Exiled by the Alexandrians, he was afterwards restored in B.C. 55. Some five years prior to this date Diodorus Siculus visited Upper Egypt, and relates that at Alexandria he saw a furious mob lynch a Roman who had unwittingly killed a cat—a fact of obvious significance with regard to the composition of the crowd, which must have contained a large non-Hellenistic element. This writer is evidently impressed with the imperviousness to Hellenism of the Egyptian people. Entrenched behind their ancient civilization, traditionally attached to their own peculiar worship, and tenacious of their immemorial customs and laws, they remained for the most part unaffected by that subtle influence which permeated and conquered so many other races of men. It was perhaps only an apparent exception that when Cleopatra, daughter of Auletes, was summoned to Tarsus by Antony, she chose to array herself not in Egyptian garb, but in that of Aphrodite, for in the end her witchery spirited away the Roman general to Egypt.

[The reigns of Ptolemy IX., Ptolemy X., and Ptolemy XII., furnish no data of importance for our purpose.]



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PLACE OF HELLENISTIC CULTURE IN THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION: HELLENISM IN SYRIA.

As used to designate an Asiatic kingdom with no real centre or natural boundaries—a kingdom covering a vast area, and including a multitudinous mass of races ruled by a Macedonian satrap and policed by his troops—the name Syria is somewhat of a misnomer.<sup>1</sup> At first, indeed, the kingdom so designated was of smaller dimensions.

#### *Seleucus I. Nicator.*

Antigonus, Alexander's general in Asia, overcame Eumenes, who was a Greek and not a Macedonian, and established himself at Antigoneia on the Orontes. But Seleucus I. Nicator, after being compelled to flee to the court of his former friend Ptolemy, King of Egypt, for protection against Antigonus, returned with heroic daring comparable to that of Garibaldi in more recent times, having only a thousand men under his command,

<sup>1</sup> Deissmann uses by preference the name Anatolia, applied under the Byzantine empire to the country east of the Bosphorus (from *ἀνατολή*, east), and corresponding virtually to Asia Minor. The territory of the Seleucid kings, however, extended far farther east than this.

and made himself master of Babylon in B.C. 312. This marks the beginning of the Seleucid era,<sup>1</sup> and a great extension of the Syrian power. During the next thirty years Seleucus consolidated his dominions as far as the Indus on the East, and by his victory over that great soldier and able strategist, Lysimachus of Thrace, throughout Asia Minor on the West. His lordship thus extended from the Hellespont to the Panjāb—a vaster territory than that governed by any future king belonging to this dynasty. Through the death of Lysimachus of Thrace, towards which Pausanias says that he “pressed eagerly,” Macedonia itself was practically within his grasp when he was treacherously slain by Keraunos, the worthless eldest son of the Egyptian Ptolemy. This wretch, having been disinherited by his father, sought shelter first at the court of Lysimachus, from which owing to the discovery of his intrigues he was forced to flee, and then at that of Seleucus, where also he had quickly begun to lay his plots. It was while the Syrian monarch, almost unattended, was inspecting a monumental cairn associated by tradition with the Argonauts, that Ptolemy dealt him from behind the dastardly and fatal blow which shook the still loosely co-ordinated fabric of the kingdom. The assassin fled in all haste to the camp at Lysimachia, assumed the diadem, and, through the previously arranged connivance of those in command, put himself at the head of the astonished army. The murdered Seleucus had well earned the title Nicator (conqueror).

<sup>1</sup> For several centuries in Hellenistic Asia events were reckoned from this era, of which exclusive use is made in the Books of Maccabees.

*Antioch and other Hellenistic Cities of Western Asia.*

Already in B.C. 301 Seleucus, having routed Antigonus at Ipsus, set about building a new capital, Antiocheia,<sup>1</sup> a little farther down the Orontes than Antigoneia, which it supplanted. Thus he and his successors were really Macedonian monarchs upon the Mediterranean, but drawing their supplies from the great hinterland of Asia. As a leading centre of Hellenistic ideas and ways during the three centuries prior to the Christian era, Antioch ranked next to Alexandria itself. Beautifully situated on the southern bank of the Orontes, where the Lebanon and Taurus ranges meet, planned by the architect Xenarius, and built so far as the site would allow upon the model of Alexandria, it was a very thriving and populous city. Although not a seaport, it was only sixteen miles distant from the fortified harbour of Seleucia.<sup>2</sup> On the confines of the desert, Antioch formed the natural point of convergence for the caravans that carried the merchandise of East and West, and the control of this route was of course a prime necessity for the new kingdom, which was to be organized upon a Hellenistic basis with Greek as its official language, and was to be dependent on its European wing for military protection. As ultimately completed, Antioch was divided into four parts, each having its own wall in addition to the common walls enclosing the whole area. Archi-

<sup>1</sup> Under the earlier Seleucid kings Antioch does not appear to have taken precedence of the other capitals—Seleucia on the Tigris, and Sardis on the coast of Asia Minor. Sardis had become a Hellenistic city, and it was there that the government archives were stored. Later on, however, Antioch was the principal seat of power.

<sup>2</sup> "Till as late as the Crusades the Orontes was navigable as far as Antioch itself."—Bevan, *op. cit.* p. 210.

tecturally and otherwise it was splendidly adorned.<sup>1</sup> Its market-place reflected the manners and customs of the world. In point of intellectual vigour, however, Antioch could not compare with Alexandria. It produced nothing great in the realm of literature. The morality of the place was notoriously bad. The suburb of Daphne—at once the glory and the shame of Syria's western capital—was the seat of the sensuous worship of Apollo and Artemis, and as much given over to licentiousness as it was rich in the treasures of art. One result of the fusion of Eastern and Western races was that the collective life of the community soon came to exhibit the worst features of both.<sup>2</sup> From the first Antioch possessed a Jewish colony enjoying if not precisely the same privileges as the Greeks, at all events substantial concessions on the ground of their religion—a fact of great significance in view of the important part

<sup>1</sup> An interesting feature connected with the foundation of these new Hellenistic cities is that expression was given to the *Fortune* (Tyche) or spiritual personality of each city by means of an artistic image. With reference to that of Antioch, which was the work of the sculptor Sicyon, Bevan remarks: "Of all the great works of art with which Antioch the Beautiful was adorned this is the only one which retains a visible form for us to-day. A copy of it in marble exists in the Vatican, just as it is shown on many of the coins of Antioch. The personified Antioch sits with a certain noble freedom, holding an ear of corn in her hand, her head crowned with flowers, and a small figure, representing the river Orontes, rising out of the ground at her feet. The original must have had all that dramatic effectiveness which stamps the products of Greek sculpture in the third century B.C."—*Op. cit.* i. p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> "This city which we know so well from the descriptions of Julian, of Libanius, and of Chrysostom, kept for centuries its character unchanged; it was emphatically the city not of commerce nor of learning, but of sensual delight, a city of keen satire, of frivolous amusement, of little reverence for majesty, human or divine."—Hodgkin, *The Trial of our Faith*, p. 315.

which it was destined to play as the cradle of the Christian Church and the starting-point of missionary enterprise.

Seleucia was purposely placed some five miles north of the mouth of the river that served to drain away all the filth of the Seleucid capital. On a rocky ledge, nearly five hundred feet higher than the lower city, which consisted mainly of the quay and the warehouses adjoining, was built the upper city of Seleucia. Steep ascents and stairways cut out of the rock afforded the necessary means of communication. The position of Seleucia was one of commanding strength as well as of natural beauty. Solid masonry, cunningly wrought into the joints of the precipitous cliffs of the lower slopes of the Pierian range, made it a veritable fortress, while the rising ground gave an imposing appearance to the principal buildings. The city paid divine honours to Seleucus its founder.

In addition to Antioch and Seleucia, Seleucus founded a third great city in the Orontes valley. This was Apamea, which lay about fifty miles south-east of Antioch, and became the military headquarters of Syria. Still another of these Greek cities established by Seleucus was the port of Laodicea, named after his mother Laodice. It was situated some ten miles south of Heraclea, was connected by mountain-roads with Apamea and with Antioch, and exported large quantities of wine to Egypt.

Under the successors of Seleucus many other Greek townships sprang up both on the coast and in the interior of Syria. These included Chalcis and Berœa, on the river Chalus, about fifty and sixty miles east of Antioch respectively; Hierapolis, some fifty miles north-east of Berœa; Seleucia, Zeugma, Thapsacus (Amphipolis),

and Dura (Europus) on the Euphrates ; Edessa, Batnæ, Carrhæ (Haran), and Ichnæ in western, and Nisibis (Antioch) in eastern Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup> According to the classical writers,<sup>2</sup> the Syrian Greeks were not counted worthy to rank with those of Macedonia and Greece. Every town would doubtless have its gymnasium, but with the exception of Apamea, the birthplace of Posidonius, few of them made any substantial contribution to Greek learning or literature. In many cases the new Hellenistic population embraced the cult of the native Syrian deities, giving to them, however, the names of their own gods. The most widespread instance of this was the worship of the Syrian goddess Atargatis (=Phœnician Ashtoreth or Astarte, and Babylonian Ishtar or Nanea). Strabo and others identify her with Venus, but Lucian considers her to be a different deity. She is represented on coins, etc., as a Siren with the head of a woman and the body of a fish.<sup>3</sup> A pond with sacred fish adjoined the temple of this goddess at Hierapolis (Bambyce). Although in ordinary life Aramaic continued to be spoken, Greek was the recognized literary and official language. "The Syrian youth, who aspired to be counted wise, found the wisdom of his fathers no longer of any savour, when he might put on the Hellenic dress and talk Zeno or Epicurus in the porticoes of the new cities."<sup>4</sup>

In spite of the firmness shown by the Phœnicians

<sup>1</sup> It is convenient for our purpose to regard Syria and Mesopotamia as one country, as indeed they virtually were, both from a geographical and an ethnical point of view.

<sup>2</sup> Livy, xxxviii. 17. 10 ; Polyb. xxxii. 6. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 4 : "Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne."

<sup>4</sup> Bevan, *op. cit.* i. p. 228.

in clinging to their native speech and political independence, as illustrated by their seven months' resistance to the siege of Alexander, they too were ultimately caught in the great wave of Hellenistic culture which swept over the Eastern world. In the last pre-Christian century Tyre and Sidon furnished representatives of the various philosophical schools then in vogue, and continued to perfect the Greek epigram "when it had come to a standstill in Alexandria."<sup>1</sup>

The influence of Hellenism made itself powerfully felt also in the cities of Cilicia, where Greek philosophy took firm root. Stoicism found exponents in Chrysippus of Soli, who developed the doctrines of Zeno its founder, and later on in Crates of Mallus, together with his disciple Zenodotus. This school was also strongly represented in Tarsus, where it numbered amongst its adherents a second Zeno, Antipater, Archidemus, Heraclides, and Nestor. Epicureanism too had its votaries, a certain Diogenes of Tarsus being mentioned in this connexion. Before his day the native city of St. Paul had become a great university, and according to Strabo outstripped even Athens and Alexandria in the zealous pursuit of learning and philosophy. As an older centre of Hellenism, Soli, notwithstanding the proverbial uncouthness of its speech,<sup>2</sup> could claim several names of eminence in the literary world of the Seleucid period. Crantor, an ornament of the Academy of Athens, Castorion, who was employed to write hymns for public festivals in the Greek capital, and the astronomical poet Aratus, all hailed from Soli.

<sup>1</sup> Susemihl, ii. p. 551, quoted by Bevan.

<sup>2</sup> Hence the term "solecism."



*The Irruption of the Gauls.*

The Seleucid empire never really recovered from the chaotic disorder into which it fell subsequent to the death of Seleucus. Strongly assailed by hostile forces from without, and torn by faction from within, it was foredoomed to decay. Yet it contrived to struggle on for upwards of two centuries, and all the while fulfilled a great mission in holding up the lighted torch of Hellenism in the East until Rome came more effectually to perform this service.

It was no easy task for Antiochus I. Soter, deserted as he was by the greater part of the imperial army, and hampered by his position in the distant East, to seat himself on his father's throne. Asia Minor in particular presented many problems. At the time of Alexander's death it was only partially subdued, and further progress in this direction had been prevented by the internecine wars of the Macedonian rivals. To rule such a country from a distance was an arduous undertaking. There was also a peculiar difficulty connected with the great cities on the sea-board. As a matter of fact, although in a sense "liberated" by the substitution of the Macedonian for the Persian dominion, and ostensibly placed under democratic rule, these cities were still in the grip of the central power. The Seleucid kings were anxious to pose as the champions of Hellenism; but Hellenism, if it meant anything, implied the autonomy of the Greeks, and this could not be granted without sacrificing the lordship of Asia. Faced by such a dilemma, the Seleucids chose to assert their own dominion rather than

play the rôle of consistent Hellenists. The idea of the independence of the several cities had to go by the board. To save appearances, however, they were called *allies*, while in fact they were subjects. But although the dream of Isocrates had not been realized, the new conditions were so far favourable to these Hellenistic communities. Their feelings were respected as they had not been before : a soft glove covered the iron hand. Thus instead of paying taxes they " contributed " men and ships for imperial needs, and felt it less of a humiliation. They also derived substantial benefit from the new régime, for the Macedonian lords not only adorned their temples and aided their public works, but also protected them from barbarian attacks as well as from mutual hostilities.

But Antiochus soon found himself confronted with a far greater menace to his authority than the troublesome elements in Asia Minor, namely, the invasion of the Gauls, who in B.C. 279 descended like a deluge over the Balkans, spreading death and desolation on every hand—an invasion in which we see the first swell of the tidal wave which was yet to submerge the Roman Empire. Macedonia was the first to suffer, and Ptolemy Keraunos, who had usurped the throne, miserably perished, so meeting a well-deserved doom. A reign of terror prevailed throughout the Hellenistic world, and Antiochus sent five hundred men to succour Greece. After some reverses, the Greeks routed the invading horde at Delphi. Previous to this, however, a considerable detachment of these savage warriors had overrun Thrace and the region of Byzantium, and ere long were looking across the Hellespont, while Antipater, the Seleucid governor,

eyed them from the Asiatic coast.<sup>1</sup> In concert with Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, the Gallic commanders with their troops crossed the Hellespont and struck terror into the people of Asia Minor. Ruthless and lawless, these stalwart savages murdered and pillaged wherever opportunity afforded or their fancy dictated. According to Livy,<sup>2</sup> they did not exceed twenty thousand in number, and of these only half were fighting men. Yet such was their brutal barbarity that they were everywhere regarded with unspeakable horror. They were the prototypes of the German hordes whose recent devastation of Belgium was rendered all the more hideous by the fact that to the brute force and savagery of their predecessors of twenty-two centuries ago they added the fiendish ingenuity of their so-called *kultur*. Owing to their readiness to foster rebellion, and to lend aid to any aggressive foe of the dynasty, these Galatians proved a thorn in the side of the house of Seleucus. Although forced back into the wilds hitherto in possession of the Phrygians, they quickly made themselves masters there, and settled down permanently, secure among their mountain fastnesses. Later on, as Strabo informs us, they became an organized community under tetrarchs and judges, and continued to levy blackmail not only

<sup>1</sup> *A propos* of the situation in Gallipoli in 1915, Edwyn Bevan, in a Letter to *The Times*, of date October 14 of that year, calls attention to the remarkable parallel contained in the account given by Herodotus, Bk. ix. 114 ff., of events enacted in B.C. 479. "So long ago, on almost the same ground, European eyes looked month after month at the fortifications which defied them; young Athenians, no doubt, were struck through by the arrows of the barbarian, and the hills of Gallipoli, with everything else earthly, faded from their eyes, whilst they told themselves they were dying for Hellas and for Athens."

<sup>2</sup> xxxviii. 16. 9.

upon the Greek cities on the coast, but even upon the royal government itself. Antiochus, however, seems to have defeated them in at least one battle, and to have been acclaimed as the saviour of Hellenism, although afterwards the Hellenistic population were inclined to regard the Gauls as a useful factor in limiting the power of the Seleucid court to destroy their independence.

### *The City State of Pergamos.*

The confusion caused by the Gallic invasion facilitated the rise of independent dynasties in different parts of Asia Minor. Cappadocia and Bithynia, for example, had kings of their own. Pergamos, in particular, under the sagacious satrap Philetærus, kept on steadily increasing its resources, and about B.C. 280, during the war between Syria and Thrace, proclaimed its independence. The successor of Philetærus was his nephew Eumenes, who was already head of a neighbouring principality. Antiochus I. could not allow so formidable a power to be established without challenge, but in a battle near Sardis he was routed by the Pergamene troops. In Attalus I. (B.C. 241-197) Pergamos had a really distinguished ruler, and under him it became a flourishing state. Although he assumed the title of king, he did not call himself king of Pergamos, preferring to figure as its "defender" or "benefactor"—an attitude afterwards imitated by the Roman Augustus. Attalus proved himself more than a match for the Seleucids, and also inflicted a signal defeat upon the Galatians, who were terrorizing the whole of Asia Minor.

His reign witnessed a real revival of Hellenism,<sup>1</sup> of which he became the leading champion in his time. A determined foe to barbarism, he was an equally ardent friend to civilization, and—in strong contrast to many of the Hellenistic kings—to domestic virtue. Art and literature, too, found in him a generous patron. No other, perhaps, came so near to realizing the ideal of a Philhellenic king.

### *The Parthian Revolt.*

The weak and dissolute Antiochus II. failed to retain a grip of north-eastern Irān. First Diodotus, satrap of Bactria, assumed the title of king, and shortly afterwards, about B.C. 250, Arsaces, a Syrian desert-chief, attained sovereign rank.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile the Syrian government was powerless to interfere. At war with Egypt, Seleucus III. (227–223) had also to fight his brother Hierax, whose claims were supported by the Galatians. In a pitched battle at Ancyra (c. B.C. 240) Seleucus was worsted, and believed to have perished. Thereupon Teridates, brother of Arsaces, overran Parthia (Khorassan), slew the Macedonian satrap, seized the province, and had himself proclaimed first king of Parthia (248–247). A man of resource and energy, he quickly added Hyrcania to his territory, and formed an alliance with Diodotus II. of Bactria against the Seleucids. It was not until the

<sup>1</sup> In the word parchment (Pergamene) we have a monument of the part played by Pergamos in the history of Hellenism.

<sup>2</sup> According to Isidore of Charax, the seat of his authority was at Asaak in Astabene, north-west of Parthia. Although his name was taken by all of his line who afterwards reigned over Parthia, he was never himself king of that country. The fact is that the origin of the Arsacid power is wrapt in obscurity.

year 238 or 237 that Seleucus III. found himself free to invade the upper provinces. Although at first Teridates sought the friendly shelter of a nomad tribe, he soon ventured to face the imperial troops; but before any decisive result could be reached Seleucus was obliged to hasten to Antioch in order to quell a revolt instigated by his aunt Stratonice. The setting up of the Parthian kingdom by Arsaces Teridates was a serious blow to the power and prestige of the Seleucid dynasty. Not only did it mean the loss of territory and revenue; it also placed a wedge between Syria and those regions in the Far East where the seed of Hellenistic culture had been sown. Such cities as Merv, in the valley of the Murghab, and Herat, the "gateway" to Afghanistan, were no longer in touch with the Hellenistic life of the West. Even Kandahār, though it lay nearly three hundred miles south-east of Herat, must have been placed in a position of unwelcome isolation. The loss of Parthia meant ultimately the loss of all territory east of the Tigris. By the new situation an effectual stop was also put to the policy of the Hellenistic kings in the matter of opening up trade routes in the north of Irān. In spite of some checks sustained at the hands of Antiochus III. the Great, the Parthian power, fed from the North by constant accessions of Parni, a branch of the people known to the Greeks as Dahæ, continued to increase, and never again came under the control of the Seleucids. The western revolts were merely political, for Pergamos and Antioch equally favoured Hellenism; but the Parthian was national and anti-Hellenistic. In later times Parthia proved the chief obstacle to Roman conquest in the East.

*Cœle-Syria under Hellenistic Rule.*

Although strictly speaking Cœle-Syria (Κοιλὴ Συρία) is the designation merely of the hollow between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, it is frequently used in a wider sense to denote the whole of Southern Syria (except Phœnicia) including Eastern Palestine. The possession of this region was for long a bone of contention between the successors of Seleucus and those of the Egyptian Ptolemy. Ptolemy had made it a condition of his alliance with Seleucus against Antigonus that Cœle-Syria should become an appanage of Egypt. As, however, he chose to withdraw his troops from the region in question, thus leaving his allies in the lurch, Seleucus took the view that the compact had been broken. Meanwhile Antigonus had been crushed at Ipsus, and Seleucus crossed the Taurus only to find that Ptolemy had forestalled him by re-occupying Palestine. Yet "for friendship's sake" he did no more than protest against this injustice, and Palestine continued under Egyptian rule for a century. At times, owing to intermarriage between scions of the two reigning dynasties, the controversy was in abeyance, but ever and anon it broke out afresh. At length under Antiochus III. the Great (222-187), whose prowess had re-established the dominion of the Seleucid house as far as the borders of India, a determined effort was made to secure the debatable territory for the Syrian kingdom. In spite of his defeat by Ptolemy at Raphia in B.C. 217, Antiochus renewed the attempt after the death of Philopator in B.C. 204, and gained the goodwill of the Jews. The later



Ptolemies had not fulfilled the promise of their predecessors, and in view of the liberal concessions held out by the Syrian government to the city and temple of Jerusalem, fascinating dreams of a recurrence of the old Persian generosity experienced under Cyrus and Darius took possession of the dwellers in Palestine. Everything pointed to a freer expansion of the national character and spirit than had been possible under Egyptian vassalage. The Ptolemaic general Scopas placed a garrison in Jerusalem, but in B.C. 198 he was triumphantly overborne by Antiochus at Panias (Cæsarea Philippi), close to the sources of the Jordan. From this date Palestine and the entire Philistine and Phœnician coast belonged to the Seleucidae, who exacted tribute from the inhabitants, and ruled them through military governors. Peremptorily prevented by the Romans from invading Egypt itself, Antiochus arranged a marriage between his daughter Cleopatra and the boy-king Ptolemy v. Epiphanes, contracting to hand over the disputed territory as her dowry, but on the footing that the two kings should halve the revenues between them.

Alike under the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid dominion the Hellenization of Coele-Syria went on apace, until it reflected Alexander's ideal more thoroughly than any other outlying province won by the Macedonian conquest. Except in Southern Palestine, Hellenism advanced triumphantly, and Greek was the language in general use. The evidence for the spread of Hellenistic culture, particularly in the coast towns and in the area east of the Jordan, is varied and conclusive. Macedonian names of towns are of frequent occurrence, as for example

Pella, Dora, Gadara, Apollonia, Anthedon, Panias, Scythopolis, Arethusa, etc. Even where native religious cults did not give way to the worship of Greek divinities, they were blended with Greek elements. This appears from engravings on coins which, though mostly of the Roman period, may fairly be regarded as reflecting the conditions of the pre-Roman period as well. Apollo and Artemis, figured on coins of Raphia, indicate the worship of purely Greek deities ; and there is significant mention by Josephus (*Ant.* xiii. 3. 3) of a temple of Apollo at Gaza in the time of Alexander Jannæus. Numismatic evidence points to the practice at Ascalon of both native and Greek cults, Astarte (Atargatis) being represented as tutelary goddesses of the town, while the names of Zeus, Apollo, Athene, etc., also appear. As the ancestral god of the Seleucids, Apollo was naturally a favourite deity throughout their dominions. On the coinage of Ptolemais (Akko), a town of importance in the Hellenistic period, the image of Zeus, nearly universal shortly before the Christian era, yields later on to those of Tyche (Fortuna), Artemis, etc. From the early days of the Macedonian conquests the trans-Jordanic region, as far as Kanatha to the east and Damascus to the north, was dotted over with numerous centres of Hellenistic culture. Afterwards, under the name of *Decapolis*, Pompey grouped them into a sort of federation, so that their free expansion might not be hampered by connexion with the Jewish state. Among these cities by far the most important was Damascus. Coins of Alexander the Great were minted there, and after the partition of his empire it was temporarily the capital of a principality. The

names of the deities inscribed upon its autonomous coins are those of Greek deities—Artemis, Athene, Niké, Dionysos ; and the name of Zeus is of frequent occurrence upon extant inscriptions collected from this city and its environs. In Scythopolis (Nysa) Dionysos ; in Gadara, Zeus ; in Gerasa, Artemis ; in Philadelphia, Herakles, would seem to have been pre-eminently worshipped. The splendid ruins of Baalbec and Palmyra, as well as of the Decapolis—including those of temples, theatres, hippodromes, etc.—although dating mostly from the Roman period—are distinctly Hellenistic in character. Hellenism also took firm root in Samaria, which was a military centre in the period of the Diadochoi, and in Panias, which was a sanctuary of the god Pan, whose image appears on numerous inscriptions and coins. Still another proof of the penetration of Hellenistic culture in not a few of these towns is found in the fact that they gave birth to men whose names are associated with Greek learning and literature. The Stoic philosopher Antiochus, who was a teacher of Cicero, and the grammarian Ptolemæus, were natives of Ascalon ; while Gadara was the birthplace of Philodemus, the Epicurean, of Meleager, the epigrammatic poet, one hundred and thirty-one of whose epigrams are preserved in Greek anthology, and of Theodorus, the rhetorician, who acted as tutor to the Emperor Tiberius.

Even in Judæa itself, where Hellenism was successfully resisted on its religious side, it made its influence felt to a considerable extent in other departments of life. And in the sphere of religion it was defeated, as we shall see presently, only after a keen struggle. The Book of Ecclesiastes, written in Palestine probably

about B.C. 200,<sup>1</sup> bears unmistakable traces of Hellenistic influence. Aristotle's conception of the chief good<sup>2</sup> seems clearly reflected in Eccles. 2<sup>3</sup>, and this lends some credibility to the story told by Clearchus in his book on sleep, and preserved by Josephus,<sup>3</sup> about Aristotle having in Asia Minor met and conversed with a Jew "who was a Greek not only in speech, but also in mind." In chapter 3<sup>1-8</sup>, containing the "Catalogue of the Times and Seasons," the writer lays down the distinctive principle of Stoicism—that of living conformably to Nature (φύσις). This he represents as a duty observed by the righteous, and flouted by the wicked (3<sup>16 f.</sup>). Among other instances of Stoic influence occurring in the book are the idea of recurring cycles in history (1<sup>9 f.</sup>); the statement in 7<sup>14</sup> that God hath set prosperity and adversity "the one over against (or corresponding to) the other," which appears to be an echo of the Stoic idea that evil is the necessary concomitant of good; the expression given to Fatalism (9<sup>11 f.</sup>); and the way in which "madness" (moral madness, that is, not mental derangement) "and folly" are contrasted with wisdom (1<sup>17</sup>, 2<sup>12</sup>, 7<sup>25</sup>).<sup>4</sup> That the author had drunk deeply from the wells of Hellenism is further shown by the fact that in some passages he

<sup>1</sup> See Tylér, *Ecclesiastes*, p. 30 ff., for the evidence pointing to this as the approximate date.

<sup>2</sup> τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἀγαθόν (*Nicomachean Ethics*, I. vii. 15).

<sup>3</sup> c. Apion, I. 22.

<sup>4</sup> An allegorizing interpretation would also find the Stoic conception of law in the idealization in 8<sup>25</sup> of "the king" as the personification of law and vicegerent of God (Law and God being for the Stoic convertible terms), but Plumptre is probably right in thinking that "the writer speaks as an observer studying the life of courts from without, not as a king asserting his own prerogative" (*Cambridge Bible*, *ad. loc.*).

also incorporates some of the tenets of the Epicureans. As man and beast alike return to dust (3<sup>20</sup>), the highest good for man, to whom immortality is thus denied, consists in the enjoyment of this life (3<sup>22</sup>, 5<sup>18</sup>) ; and he who passes his time in such tranquil felicity "remembereth not much the days of his life," since there is little to mark off one from another (5<sup>20</sup>). What is this but the coveted serenity (*ἀταραξία*) of the Epicurean ?

That both Stoic and Epicurean ideas should be reflected in Ecclesiastes is not surprising in view of the fact that the emergence of these systems in the development of philosophical thought was practically simultaneous. And if certain Stoic or Epicurean dogmas fail to find recognition in the book, this is sufficiently explained by the consideration that the writer was a Jew, and that he was not aiming at producing a philosophical treatise. Even where he exhibits acquaintance with Greek thought, it is natural to expect some modification of philosophical systems pure and simple. For instance, in substituting God for "the gods" of the philosophers, and in representing Him as caring for humanity in a way not conceived by them (5<sup>19</sup>), Koheleth shows that, though influenced by Greek philosophy, he could not divest himself of his Judaism. As a matter of fact, in his allusions to either Stoicism or Epicureanism, we do well to regard him as concerned only with questions which formed the subject of discussion in the Jewish schools of his time. Hebraism, not Hellenism, remains, after all, the controlling factor in his thought. While revealing acquaintance with, his book does not aim at advocating, Greek philosophical tenets ; it was probably intended

rather as a warning against philosophical speculation, and as a plea for reverence toward God and for obedience to the Law (12<sup>13</sup>). His commendation of practical religion as the true pathway to happiness is based upon personal experience. He had discovered for himself that the pursuit of pagan philosophy was inimical to the traditional Jewish faith, and to this faith he was resolved to cling as that which, when all was said, truly offered the highest good. For him this was "the conclusion of the whole matter."

Jewish expectations were again doomed to disappointment. The Syrian rule proved less welcome to the people of Palestine than did the Egyptian. While the Ptolemies, at least until the time of Philopator, had treated them with uniform kindness, the Seleucids were too much inclined to force the pace in the matter of Hellenizing their Semitic subjects. They drafted in heathen settlers and conferred upon them special privileges. After the crushing defeat of Antiochus by the Romans at Magnesia in B.C. 190, the heavy indemnity exacted by them reduced him and his successors to such financial straits that they were driven to the sacrilegious and highly unpopular expedient of robbing temples within their own territory in order to replenish their treasury. Throughout Coele-Syria and Northern Palestine, however, the population remained quite loyal to the Seleucids.

### *The Maccabæan Revolt.*

By far the most striking episode in the history of Hellenism was enacted in Judæa in the reign of Antiochus



iv. Epiphanes (B.C. 175-165).<sup>1</sup> When this king came to the throne, Greek manners and customs had obtained a considerable hold upon the Jewish people. Two distinct parties had arisen—that of the Ḥasîdîm (=“pious ones,” practically identical with the Pharisees of a somewhat later date), who cultivated and developed the Law, and frowned upon foreign culture; and that of the Sadducees, who rejected the prophetic writings, accepted the Pentateuch only, and were well affected towards the new Hellenistic fashions. The one party practised a punctilious and rigid legalism, the other was a priestly aristocracy who valued the sacred office merely on account of the worldly emoluments and privileges it carried with it. During the period of Greek rule, first under the Ptolemies and afterwards under seven Seleucid kings, the Sadducees had the upper hand in Jerusalem. From the Books of Maccabees and Josephus we learn that a gymnasium was set up in the Holy City,<sup>2</sup> that Greek games and athletic exercises were freely practised, and that Jewish youths disported themselves in Greek costume. In short the process of Hellenization was in full swing, and everything pointed to an early and general adoption by the Jewish race of the new modes of thought and life which were already in vogue in the surrounding countries. All the more enterprising Jews set themselves to acquire a knowledge of Greek, and did not consider their education complete until they had visited Alexandria or Antioch and felt for themselves the pulse of

<sup>1</sup> Antiochus succeeded in usurping the throne owing to the absence as a hostage in Rome of Demetrius, the son of Seleucus IV., at the time of that monarch's assassination by Heliodorus, his chief minister, who hoped to secure the kingdom for himself.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Macc. 1<sup>14</sup>; 2 Macc. 4<sup>12</sup>; Josephus, *Ant.* xii. 5. 1.



the rich and varied life that throbbed in those great cosmopolitan communities.

Hitherto the Egyptian and Syrian kings, as overlords of Palestine, had been content to receive a fixed annual tribute from the acting high priest at Jerusalem, without interfering with Jewish laws and observances. But now there came a sudden and dramatic change in the situation, consequent upon the mad attempt of Antiochus IV. Epiphanes to suppress Judaism entirely, and to compel the adoption of heathen customs and worship. In Palestine, under the base and absolutely irreligious high priests Jason and Menelaus, many Jews had imbibed the Greek spirit, while abroad also multitudes of them developed their instinct for trade and money-making. But along with all this they showed no disposition to sink their claim to be "the elect and godly Messianic people," and to the world-wide lordship which such a title implied. In the face of such glaring inconsistency they could not realize the rights which they asserted. The true religion had in it the potentiality of a reconciling bond between them and the heathen, and was inherently able to attract and absorb them in one universal kingdom, but they were not yet ready for this. The Messianic days, so long predicted, were yet in the future. Although proselytes to Judaism continued to drop in from various parts of heathendom, there was nowhere the plenteous rain of which the prophets had spoken. So far from this, a feeling of mutual repulsion sprang up between Israel and other nations in general. To use St. Paul's phrase, they were "contrary to all men." Thus Jewish pride and patriotism were stronger than the attractions of Hellenism, and in face of the deadly blow aimed by

Epiphanes at their ancestral worship the people of Judæa determined to offer an armed resistance to the Syrian oppression. Hence the crisis of the Maccabæan revolt, which ended not only in the total elimination, for the time at least, of Hellenistic influences, and in the victorious assertion by the Jews of their religious liberties, but also in the rise of the Hasmonæan dynasty, and in the crystallization of a well-marked national type which survives to this day.

Antiochus really played into the hands of the Ḥasîdîm, who had constituted themselves champions of the Law in opposition to the Hellenizing party among the Jews. At first indeed it seemed as if his policy had been crowned with success. Ostensibly, in order to punish some turbulent collisions between the partisans of Jason and of Menelaus, Antiochus arrived at Jerusalem, slaughtered thousands of the inhabitants, and desecrated the Temple, arrogantly entering the Holy of holies, and pillaging the sacred shrine. Two years later, in B.C. 168, smarting under the check imposed on him by the Romans, whose ambassador Popilius Lænas had extorted from him a definite promise that he would retire from Egypt, he sent his general Apollonius to lay waste the hapless city. From this date a Syrian garrison occupied the citadel (Akra) dominating the Temple precincts. On pain of death Israelites were required to abjure their own religious rites and to sacrifice to idols. Copies of the Law, wherever found, were burnt, torn, or bedaubed with idol pictures. Circumcision was prohibited by law. In fine, the most rigorous religious persecution was inaugurated, and many disowned their faith rather than forfeit their lives. But the majority refused to

be terrorized. At first, owing to their scruples about fighting on the Sabbath, a thousand fugitives allowed themselves to be butchered ; but when Mattathias, an aged priest of Modin, supported by his five valiant sons, raised the standard of revolt, wiser counsels prevailed. The Ḥasîdîm, who had no end in view save freedom to worship God according to their conscience,<sup>1</sup> rallied round these heroic defenders of the faith, and began to undo the work of the pagan propagandists. Heathen altars were pulled down, apostates slain, and Jewish rites restored. Soon afterwards, on the death of Mattathias, the leadership of the movement fell to his son Judas Maccabæus, under whose superb generalship the Syrian troops were repeatedly put to rout. During a lull in the hostilities the Temple was purified, and the altar of Jahweh re-consecrated by the offering of the appointed sacrifices. After the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in the Far East (B.C. 164), the Syrian general Lysias defeated Judas at Beth-zacharias, and seemed likely to reduce Mt. Zion also ; but as his presence at Antioch was now urgently required by important affairs of state, he immediately ceded to the Jews by treaty the religious freedom for which they had drawn the sword. As an imperial policy Hellenization by force had not turned out a success, and was never again resorted to. In its subsequent stages the Maccabæan struggle resolved itself into a war for political independence, which was at length attained in B.C. 142 under Simon, last surviving brother of Judas, and founder of the Hasmonæan dynasty.

<sup>1</sup> That their aims were purely religious is proved by the fact that they co-operated with the Maccabees only so long as they fought for the restoration of Jewish worship. See 1 Macc. 7<sup>13</sup>.

The Holy had not been vanquished by the Beautiful, nor in the national mind had the name of the Lord of hosts paled before the glitter of a heathen Pantheon. The terrible ordeal through which the Jews had passed left an indelible impression upon their descendants. Echoes of the Maccabæan struggle are still heard in New Testament writings two centuries later. That it strengthened their religious prejudices is apparent from the intense Pharisaism with which our Lord had to contend, from the horror with which St. Peter recoiled from the idea of eating anything common or unclean (Acts 10<sup>14</sup>), and from the angry accusation levelled against St. Paul: "He hath brought Greeks into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place" (Acts 21<sup>28</sup>). How it also deepened their national sentiment we may gather from what is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews regarding the heroic triumphs of those "who out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. . . . And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection" (11<sup>34 f.</sup>).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1 Macc. 4<sup>14</sup>, 22, 35; 5<sup>7</sup>, 34, etc., and 2 Macc. 7.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE PLACE OF HELLENISTIC CULTURE IN THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION: HELLENISM IN THE ORIENT.

#### *The Nearer East.*

EVEN on the torrid banks of the Euphrates and Tigris new Hellenistic cities, peopled partly by natives, and partly by Greek mercenaries and war-worn Macedonian soldiers, began to spring up in the time of Alexander the Great. Among these was an Alexandria mentioned by Pliny. Others of the same name, and also an Apamæa, arose on the Messenian coast. The process of founding new cities, and of Hellenizing old ones, was continued under the Seleucid kings. Several Seleucias were built, and names like Antioch, Apollonia, Artemita, etc., frequently occur. Sittace is an instance of an existing city being Hellenized.<sup>1</sup> By the creation of Seleucia on the Tigris, fifteen miles below Baghdad, Seleucus Nicator practically drained the life of ancient Babylon. The vicious moral atmosphere of that city threatened to prove fatal to Macedonian troops; but he can hardly have supposed that this would be remedied by transferring the population to new quarters some forty miles distant. His principal object, no doubt, was

<sup>1</sup> According to Pliny, it was of Greek origin, but Xenophon already speaks of it as a great city.

to utilize the peculiarly favourable position of the new city for trading purposes: it could control the traffic of the Euphrates as well as that of the Tigris, the intervening space between the two rivers being but twenty-five miles. Although Seleucia grew to be one of the greatest cities of the world, and seems to have clung tenaciously to its Hellenistic traditions, it failed to impress the world's imagination like Babylon, or even Baghdad. That the house of Seleucus followed the policy of the great Macedonian in the matter of religious toleration also, is manifest from the fact that just as Alexander caused the dilapidated temples to be rebuilt as in the time of Nebuchadrezzar, so in B.C. 268 Antiochus I. laid the foundation of a new temple of Nebo on the old site at Borsippa. Hellenistic literature and science appear to have been not a little benefited by the studies of Babylonian Greeks. "Diogenes of Seleucia, called 'the Babylonian' (about 243-155), listened to Chrysippus, and became in time head of the Stoic school. Apollonius of Artemita was in Strabo's time the great authority for Parthian history. But what is above all interesting is to see the ancient Babylonian mind caught in the movement of new ideas and exercising itself in the field of Hellenic [=Hellenistic] culture. Berosus, the priest of Bel, aspires to the distinction of a Greek historian, and writes the fables and the history of his race for these Western people to read, encouraged by the grace of King Antiochus I. From the work of Berosus almost all that was known of Babylonian history, till the inscriptions were found and deciphered, was ultimately derived. There is another figure of peculiar interest in this connexion. A native of lower

Babylonia, of the region near the sea, he is drawn to the great centre of Seleucia, takes the Macedonian name Seleucus, and goes deep into the mathematical science of the Greeks. His writings were given to the world about the middle of the second century B.C. ; they were still known to Strabo and Plutarch. They seem to have been indeed of a high scientific order. Not only did he advance true views about tides, but he set about proving that the earth and the planets really go about the sun. The Babylonian, quickened by contact with Hellenism, anticipates Copernicus.”<sup>1</sup>

By the year B.C. 221, which Polybius selects as the starting-point of his history, Hellenistic life in Egypt, Macedonia, and Syria was distinctly on the wane. It still, however, retained its vigour in Rhodes and Pergamos, and in various free Greek cities of the Nearer East. Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Pontus could each boast a Hellenistic capital, and in these lands there were many ardent devotees of Hellenistic culture. Even the barbarous Galatians embellished their capital with their ill-gotten spoils, and gained some working acquaintance with the universal language of the times. The Hellenization of the Nearer East must be regarded, in short, as a well-established fact. Greater interest, however, attaches to the question : To what extent did Greek influence penetrate the great continent of Asia ?

### *Central Asia.*

According to Polybius, “ Media was covered with Greek cities, after the plan prescribed by Alexander, to

<sup>1</sup> Bevan, *op. cit.* i. p. 256.



form a defence against the neighbouring barbarians." Yet we know the names of comparatively few. Indeed we can find traces of only three—Europus (the older Median Rhagæ), the birthplace of Strabo, Heraclea (afterwards restored under the name of Achaïs), and an Apamea Rhagiana, mentioned by Pliny. The conditions obtaining in Persis are likewise wrapt in obscurity, scarcely relieved by the occurrence of the Greek names Laodicea, Antioch, and Methone. In Parthia, too, only three Hellenistic cities are referred to by the ancient historians, namely, Alexandrinopolis, Calliope, and Hecatompylus. Eumeneia is the sole Greek town in Hyrcania of which explicit mention is made. The province of Aria possessed an Alexandria, and also an Achaia of the Seleucid period. In Margiana (Merv) the Greek colony seems to have been swamped by the Parthians, but the capital of Drangiana (Seistān), which was transformed into a Greek colony and called Prothasia, remained a place of importance on the route to India. There was an Alexandria (Kandahār) in Arachosia (S. Afghanistan), another on the coast of Gedrosia (Baluchistan), a third in Carmania (Kirmān), and a fourth between the Kābul valley and Bactria.

The remote provinces of Bactria and Sogdiāna,<sup>1</sup> regarded by some as the cradle of Zoroastrianism and of the civilization of Irān, boldly defied Alexander, who placed in them large contingents of Greek settlers. Among the cities thus established was an Alexandrian

<sup>1</sup> Bactria lay between the Hindu Kush and the Oxus, and practically corresponded to N. Afghānistan. Sogdiāna (Bukhāra) was the territory between the Oxus and the Jaxartes (Syr Daria).

Eschate, on the Jaxartes (Syr Daria)—the “farthest” outpost of Hellenism, “in whose market-place, in the centuries after Alexander, the Greek trader from the West saw the Indian caravans which had come across the snowy ridges of the Tian-shan mountains, bringing the new substance of silk and stories of the great cities of the silk-people, which lay in some distant world far away to the east.”<sup>1</sup> In point of fact, however, the new colonists largely consisted of disaffected Greeks exiled by way of punishment, and animated by hostile feelings towards their Macedonian allies, as well as by a desire to return home at the first opportunity. Scarcely was Alexander’s back turned when they rose in mutiny. This cleavage between the imported Europeans themselves must have considerably weakened the impact of Hellenism upon the native Asiatic population.

Nevertheless the Greek influence continued to spread. There is evidence to show that it extended as far as Khotan, in the Kuenlun region, between Eastern Turkestan and the wilds of Northern Tibet. In 1896, at the village of Borasan, some three miles west of Khotan, the Swedish traveller Sven Hedin was able to pick up no fewer than 523 “small articles in terra-cotta, bronze images of Buddha, engraved gems, coins,<sup>2</sup> and so forth,” which “exhibit proofs that the ancient arts of India, as refined by the influence of Greece, penetrated even to the very heart of Asia.” Amongst those classed as “purely imitative,” some, *e.g.* the

<sup>1</sup> Bevan, *op. cit.* i. p. 277.

<sup>2</sup> The earliest Khotan coins have been assigned approximately to the first and second centuries A.D.

griffins, are distinctly akin to "the eagle-clawed griffin of Greek mythology, as it was depicted about the third century B.C." It was, moreover, at the beginning of that century, in the period of the Diadochoi, when Hellenistic kingdoms were established on both sides of the Indus, that the ideas of Greek art in a highly developed form began to be widely disseminated in those regions. "The neighbourhood of Peshawar seems to have been the centre" from which they emanated.<sup>1</sup> Further evidence is found in the facts recorded by Sir Aurel Stein.<sup>2</sup> That Buddhist sculpture was developed under Hellenistic influence is proved by the stucco frescoes unearthed at Dandan-Uiliq (Litsa), as well as by "the rich statuary of the Rawak Stupa Court,<sup>3</sup> and the decorative wood-carvings of the ancient site beyond Niya." And the Kharoshthī tablets—documents of a secular character, written mostly in an Indian language, on wood and leather, by officials bearing distinctly non-Indian titles, and of which numerous seal impressions in clay,<sup>4</sup> some of them intact, have come to light—show how Western art had pushed itself into Central Asia. Sir Aurel Stein writes: "It was a delightful surprise when, on cleaning the first intact seal impression that turned up, I recognized in it the figure of Pallas Athene, with ægis and thunderbolt, treated in an archaic fashion." Other Greek deities are similarly represented on other seals. It is note-

<sup>1</sup> *Through Asia*, ii. p. 759 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *The Sand-Buried Ruins of Khotan*, p. 396.

<sup>3</sup> The date of this is, however, uncertain.

<sup>4</sup> See Fig. 95 in vol. i. of Stein's *Ruins of Desert Cathay*; also *Clay Seals of Kharoshthī Documents on Wood, Niya site*, p. lxxii of the same writer's *Ancient Khotan*, vol. ii. (Plates).

worthy that to one of these documents there is affixed a precise date, namely, the fifth year of the Tai-shih period of the Emperor Wuti=A.D. 296. This fully accords with the well-established fact that for two or three centuries before and after the commencement of the Christian era Græco-Buddhist art was widely practised in Gandhāra and adjacent regions in the extreme north-west of India.

Numerous art relics recovered in 1907 near Tun-Huang, at the western extremity of the ancient "Great Wall," are further pointed to by Stein as conclusive evidence that Greek influence extended to Chinese Turkestan. Referring to his own archæological researches in this region, this writer remarks: "The discovery of fine wood-carvings in Græco-Buddhist style, and of beautiful frescoes quite classical in style that once adorned Buddhist shrines, offered unexpected testimony to the powerful influence exercised by Hellenistic art even on the confines of true China."<sup>1</sup>

Fresco-fragments from the distant regions of the Tarim basin, as well as sculptures from Gandhāra, would thus seem to bear the impress of the classical models of the West. In particular, the use of "chiaroscuro," invariably displayed in the frescoes of Miran, was a new thing in the pictorial work of the Far East, and directly due to the wave of Hellenistic culture which at this epoch swept over the world. Concerning the fine winged figures of the Miran dado, Stein's conclusion is that it is "the young winged Eros of Greek mythology to whom these figures must be traced back as their ultimate ancestor (although not without intermediate stages

<sup>1</sup> *Ruins of Desert Cathay*, i. pp. x-xi.

in which an infiltration of Oriental conceptions has left its mark)." <sup>1</sup>

In accordance with Alexander's policy of fusing Greeks, Macedonians, and Persians into one great nation, the satraps at the time of his death were drawn deliberately from each of these racial types. Many natives of the various provinces also combined with Greek settlers to form the population of the new cities. But although there was thus effected a mixture of Greeks and barbarians, the dominant characteristics of all these cities were Hellenistic. The machinery of government was supplied by the new masters, and sometimes transfers of citizens were made from one centre to another with an eye to the advancement and glory of Hellenism. A case in point is that of Magnesia-on-the-Meander, which at the request of Antiochus I. Soter sent a number of fresh colonists to Antioch-in-Persis.<sup>2</sup> In the easterly section of Irān there seems to have been some friction between Greeks and barbarians, arising out of certain practices sanctioned by Oriental custom but abhorrent to Hellenists. Alexander forcibly suppressed the Bactrian atrocity of exposing to the sacred dogs persons *in articulo mortis*, just as the British have prohibited the practice of sati. Hence perhaps the fact that one who

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* i. p. 476. Referring to the "caves of the Thousand Buddhas" (Tun-Huang), Stein says (ii. p. 25): "In the figures of Buddhas particularly, the faithful preservation of the type of face, pose, and drapery as developed by Græco-Buddhist art was most striking."

<sup>2</sup> This is recorded on a stone inscription discovered in Asia Minor and dating from the reign of Antiochus III. The document is also interesting as showing "the normal forms of the Greek city-state, a *boule* and an *ekklesia*, a γραμματεὺς τῆς βουλῆς, who introduces the decree in the popular assembly, and πρυτάνεις, who put it to the vote" (Bevan).

habitually encouraged national cults is pilloried in Zoroastrian sacred writings as a religious oppressor.

*The Panjāb.*

Many interesting associations are bound up with the somewhat difficult but well-trodden route across the Hindu Kush to the Kābul Valley and the north-west frontier region of India.

“The trail of the Greek is to be found on those plains reaching outwards from the northern slopes of the mountain masses which range themselves in a solid phalanx of obstructiveness on the northern flanks of the Hindu Kush, and that trail is distinctly recognizable in Kafiristan to-day.”<sup>1</sup>

Nor does it cease there. Alexander's conquering armies pushed on to the Indus, and beyond it, and Hellenistic townships were established at every stage in their onward march, in order that the life of Greek cities might be reproduced upon the river-banks of India. Having received the submission of Porus and Taxiles,<sup>2</sup> the two most powerful of the Indian chiefs—in the one case after a stubborn fight, and in the other by voluntary surrender—the great Macedonian appointed them rulers over a wider area than had been subject to them before, due safeguards being of course taken to secure Macedonian control. The realm of Taxiles extended from the Indus to the Hydaspes (Jihlam), and that of Porus from the Hydaspes to the Hyphasis (Beās), their joint territories thus corresponding largely to the modern Panjāb.

<sup>1</sup> T. H. Holdich, in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, for July 1919, p. 113 f.

<sup>2</sup> Porus (Paurava), the king of the Pūrus, and Taxiles, the king of Takshaśilā (Taxila).

Hellenistic mercantile cities, duly equipped with docks and wharves, were planted at intervals along the banks of the Indus, with a view to making it a great highway for the trade of nations. On the lower Indus a Macedonian and an Iranian chief exercised co-ordinate jurisdiction, but this territory was subsequently added to the dominion of Porus. At the time of the chaotic upheaval caused by Alexander's early death, the dissolution of the numerous petty principalities of India was a foregone conclusion, and at once became an accomplished fact. The new Hellenistic structure was as yet too loosely co-ordinated to hold together. A talented native, Chandragupta (Sandrocottus), seeing his opportunity, established himself as king of the Panjāb.<sup>1</sup> Seleucus marched his troops into the East to dispute this usurpation, but being compelled to try conclusions with Antigonus in Syria, he hastily negotiated an alliance with Chandragupta, who then asserted his authority as far as the Ganges. Although his was by no means a Hellenistic kingdom, he and his successors were largely influenced by the doings of the new masters. They even offered sacrifices after the Greek fashion, and by paying divine honours to the great Macedonian bore witness to the fact that their kingdom had been evolved out of Alexander's empire. The way was opened up for Greek traders, and Bindusāra, who succeeded his father Chandragupta, wrote to Antiochus asking for a teacher of Hellenistic culture, but only to get the reply that the Greeks did not trade in sophists.

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch states that Chandragupta, while yet a boy, "saw Alexander there." Historically, the meeting of these two personages is of surpassing interest, for to them, directly or indirectly, was largely due the transformation of the East.



How indubitable was the influence of the Macedonian conquest upon the future of that vast country may be gathered from the brief indication given above.<sup>1</sup> Still, Hellenism scarcely got a chance in India. Not, perhaps, that it was essentially alien to the Hindu mind, but rather because the world-conqueror died before it could take root. Had Alexander lived to old age, and time been given for the seed-beds of Greek propaganda sown by him to fructify, there seems no reason why India should not have been Hellenized to the same extent as the Nearer East.<sup>2</sup> The contact between the Greek and Indian worlds had been too brief to be anything but superficial; they had merely rubbed shoulders, so to speak. Yet even so, Hellenism did not fail to leave its mark. If Alexander's conquest of the Panjāb left no lasting impression upon India, his subjugation of the neighbouring countries certainly led to the subsequent entrenchment of Hellenistic culture and Hellenistic art in the north-west.

At the same time it is probable that the influence exercised was not all on one side, and that Hindu life and thought reacted to a considerable extent upon Hellenism. Even in the north-west of India, where the

<sup>1</sup> Some interesting facts regarding the influence of Greek art in India are noted in *A Guide to Taxila*, published in 1918 by Sir John Marshall, Director-General of Archæology in India, and in the same writer's *Memoirs of the Archæological Survey of India*; see especially, No. 7, 1921, Excavations at Taxila (20 miles N.W. of Rawalpindi). The work of exploration at Sirkap (founded apparently in the second century B.C.) and other ancient sites in Rawalpindi district, is still being prosecuted, and may be expected to result in the further discovery of Hellenistic work such as the fine head of Dionysus in silver repoussé, and the beautiful bronze statuette of the child-god Hippocrates, already brought to light.

<sup>2</sup> See, however, on this point, Note 6, p. 383.

influence of Greek art so strongly asserted itself, it gradually grew more decadent. This process is clearly traceable in the coinage which has been preserved. As time went on, Greek features were scrapped in favour of Indian elements, and Eastern ideas found freer expression. Aśoka, Bindusāra's son, became a Buddhist, and not only made Buddhism the State religion, but also showed great zeal as a propagandist of that cult. Thus the political unity that had resulted from Alexander's conquests also paved the way towards religious unity in India, though not on a Hellenistic basis. That Buddhist missionaries were dispatched throughout Central Asia and even to the Hellenistic cities of the West, stands recorded on the rocks of India,<sup>1</sup> the art of sculpture and engraving upon stone having apparently been learned by the Indians from the Greek invaders. In view of the alleged mission of Buddhist preachers to Syria a century or two before the Christian era, a new interest attaches, moreover, to the somewhat remarkable similarity between the accounts of the birth and life of Buddha and those of the Gospels relating to the Advent and activity of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the striking affinity between Hinduism as set forth in the *Upanishads* and the doctrines of Plato as set forth in the *Republic*, raises the question whether the Greek philosophy is

<sup>1</sup> According to Clemen, however, "Aśoka's statement that he had sent missionaries to various Greek kings, friends of Antiochus II. of Bactria, deserves not a particle of credit."—*Primitive Christianity and its non-Jewish Sources*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> At the same time there is no proof that early Buddhism exercised any appreciable influence upon Christianity. See Clemen, *op. cit.* p. 34 f. The opposite view, however, is maintained by Steck, *Der Einfluss des Buddhismus auf das Christentum*, 1892, and Seydel, *Die Budda-Legende und das Leben Jesu nach den Evangelien*<sup>2</sup>, 1897.

not, directly or indirectly, debtor to the Hindu. An affirmative answer may seem to be suggested by the close parallelisms which they exhibit, and the traditional notion that the philosophical ideas of the Greeks are marked by undiluted originality may possibly have to be abandoned. But can we explain by what channel Indian thought may presumably have reached the Athenian philosophers of the fourth century B.C. ? This is the crux of the whole matter.<sup>1</sup>

While the Platonic doctrine of the supreme value of the spiritual had been already anticipated in Asia, and had been promulgated in Greece, it fell short of the full truth as enshrined in the sayings of Jesus. The affirmation of the spiritual nature of man needed to be reinforced by the teaching of Christianity regarding the infinite value of every human soul in order to provide the world with an idealism of a truly inspirational kind, and fitted to bring about the best social results. These have never been yielded by Eastern religions on account of their rigid adherence to *caste*, to the doctrine of the essential inferiority of some human beings to others. Brahmanism and the sociology of Plato are equally marred by this defect, and equally powerless to set in motion those spiritual forces which make for the advancement of the race. Nothing short of the recognition of the divine element in every man can ever accomplish this.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 7, p. 384.

## CHAPTER IX.

### DEFECTS OF HELLENISTIC CULTURE.

IMPORTANT as is the place of Greek culture in the history of civilization, it was marred by two great defects. For one thing, it was

#### *A Philosophy for the Few.*

This is true alike as regards the teaching of Plato and as regards that of the later schools of the Stoics and Epicureans. Clement (*Strom.* v. 1) represents Plato as saying in the *Epinomis*: "I do not say that it is possible for all to be blessed and happy; only a few." Although this is one of the many spurious writings which have been ascribed to Plato, the brief quotation expresses quite accurately the spirit of his philosophy. In the *Crito* (c. 2) Socrates is made to say: "Why should we care about the opinion of the many?" Similarly in the *Republic* (Bk. vi. c. 8; *ibid.* c. 10) Plato declares: "The multitude never will admit or reckon that there is the one beautiful itself, and not many beautiful. . . . It is impossible, then, for the multitude to be philosophers." His doctrine is essentially aristocratic, and intended only for the elect who share his culture, knowledge, and view of life.

Aristotle, it must be admitted, is more practical in his outlook. He views men as men, and does not lay the same stress upon metaphysics as the sole passport to virtue. In the philosophy of the Stagirite there is some appreciation of the average man, and a firm insistence upon action versus contemplation as the real foundation of happiness and the secret of ethical progress. "The exercise of his (man's) faculties in the way of virtue is what determines happiness, and the contrary the contrary. . . . Why then should we not call happy the man who works in the way of perfect virtue, and is furnished with external goods sufficient for acting his part in the drama of life?" (*Ethics*, i. 8).

That in respect of aristocratic exclusiveness the position of the later Greek philosophy in no way differed from that of the great master of the classical period is clear from the didactic conversations of Epictetus handed down by one of his students—Arrian the historian. Although emphatic in his assertion of the brotherhood of all men as "sons of God" and citizens of the world, Epictetus is at no pains to utter a word of counsel regarding political and social questions. His standpoint is strictly individualistic. When he says: "You need but will, and it is done, it is set right," the words are not addressed to the general public; his appeal is only to the select few. To quote Dean Church, "His great anxiety was that those who had high qualities should not misdirect or throw them away, but educate them to the highest perfection. This is his hope for the world—the saving and turning to full account of its choicest and noblest natures."<sup>1</sup> In vain, according to Epictetus, do

<sup>1</sup> *Occasional Papers*, i. p. 113.

philosophers attempt to impart their wisdom to the multitude, which must take its own course. Those conscious of their own superiority should treat it with a good-natured tolerance. Wares like his are not for the many. "Can these things," he asks, "be explained to the multitude? To what purpose? Is it not sufficient to be convinced oneself? When children come to us clapping their hands and saying, 'To-morrow is the good feast of Saturn,' do we tell them that good doth not consist in such things? By no means; but we clap our hands also. Thus, when you are unable to convince any one, consider him as a child, and clap your hands with him, or, if you will not do that, at least hold your tongue" (i. 29). To one Florus, who hesitated to appear upon the stage although refusal of Nero's request to do so would expose him to the risk of having his head struck off, he represents Agrippinus as saying: "Go then and take a part, but I will not." "Why?" "Because you consider yourself to be only one thread of those which are in the tunic. Well then you have nothing to care for but how to be like the rest of men, just as the thread has no design to be anything superior to the other threads. But I wish to be the purple one, that small and brilliant part which gives a lustre and beauty to all the rest. Why then do you bid me make myself like the many? At that rate, how shall I be the purple?" (i. 2).

Greek philosophy, then, as a whole, sought to establish an intellectual aristocracy. According to the majority of its exponents, the key to virtue is knowledge, and only trained thinkers can hope to be good. "Even the pious wise man remains an aristocrat. The heart of

the nation has no part or lot in his wisdom.”<sup>1</sup> In the declared judgement of its teachers philosophy, however excellent and precious, is no possession for the race, and can be attained only by the *élite*. These formed a kind of superior caste. As Renan remarks, “the Gnostic saint was already a Brahman *in posse*.” “I speak for one in a thousand,” said Basilides; “the rest are dogs and swine.” “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,” said He who often found more truth in the spontaneous utterances of babes and sucklings than in the elaborate dissertations of the learned. Jesus knew nothing of a close syndicate of demi-gods dispensing truth for the sole consumption of the initiate. Christianity appealed to the multitude, the Stoic philosophers to the few. While they mistakenly sought to specialize truth and virtue, Jesus declared: “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” And the Galilean conquered. Apart from other considerations, Stoicism and Gnosticism “perished for lack of a public.”

The radical defect of Hellenism, however, was that it was

### *Weak Ethically.*

It is significant that in the Greek language there is no word for sin corresponding to the Hebrew חַטָּא. The Greek might err (*ἀμαρτεῖν*) in the sense of missing a mark, but he was an utter stranger to that consciousness of treason to an infinitely holy God which constitutes the idea of sin in Judaism and in Christianity. To a Greek artistic feeling was more than morality. “Nothing in

<sup>1</sup> Heinrici, *op. cit.* p. 18.



excess" is the cardinal principle of Greek wisdom. Indulgence is to be shunned not because it is in itself evil, but because the even balance of life is thereby disturbed. This theoretical position came to be only too clearly reflected in the actual social and domestic life of Hellas. The old Greek religion has been correctly described as "an imaginative rather than an ethical faith," and this applies equally to its later developments. Even "by the time of Plato the traditional religion of the Greek states was, if taken at its face value, a bankrupt concern. There was hardly one aspect in which it could bear criticism; and in the kind of test that chiefly matters, the satisfaction of men's ethical requirements and aspirations, it was if anything weaker than elsewhere."<sup>1</sup> In the later centuries the influx of Persian wealth, together with a growing disbelief in the national religion, had a woefully demoralizing tendency. The undying charm of Greek literature and art, and that priceless anti-utilitarian inspiration which we owe to the Hellenes, incline us to think too kindly of Greek religion and morals. We see here the love of the beautiful, a feeling for the fine arts never equalled in any nation. But when we look below the surface of this sensuous civilization, when we turn from the contemplation of the extraordinary gracefulness so characteristic of it in all its branches, and fix our attention on the ethical standards and practice that prevailed, we find that in this home of material beauty the higher beauty of morals—what Scripture calls "the beauty of holiness"—is as nearly as may be non-existent. The incident of the sick man lying at the "Beautiful Gate" of the (Herodian) temple (Acts 3<sup>2</sup>) may symbolize

<sup>1</sup> Professor Gilbert Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 107.

for us the state of matters that obtained everywhere in Greece. Material splendour and moral degradation existed side by side. There was indeed no lack of lofty ideals set forth in their marvellous literature ; but the question is not concerning the creations of the imagination—a sphere in which nothing transcended their powers—but concerning the actual life of the men and women who inhabited Greece. It is nothing to the purpose that we have such splendid patterns of womanhood as the Iphigenia of Euripides or the Antigone of Sophocles. The one, as a picture of calm submission, and the other, as an example of lofty devotion, cannot be surpassed. Finer portraits we could not wish for, but they are only ideal portraits. They live in the books, but were scarcely to be found in the homes, of Greece. At our Lord's Advent the state of family life throughout the great classical world was thoroughly corrupt. Exceptions there may have been. There are lilies among thorns, and there are virtuous men in the worst of periods. Greece had its Socrates, and Rome its Marcus Aurelius. But the general depravity of the age is undeniable. On this point the evidence is overwhelming, and all historians are agreed. Hellenism had both succeeded and failed.

## CHAPTER X.

### HELLENISTIC PIETY.

*Based on Cosmology of the Period.*

RIGHTLY to apprehend the nature of Hellenistic piety, it is necessary to realize that it was based upon the view of the world prevalent at the time. The earth, inhabited by men, was considered the centre of the universe. Over it and under the moon was the world of air inhabited by dæmons. Still higher lay the world of æther, the dwelling-place of the gods. Man was deemed a composite being, combining in himself the four elements of the cosmos (earth, air, fire, and water), and sharing in virtue of his spirit the ethereal air of the gods. The universe was thus conceived as a closely connected whole, while the earth was regarded as the image of the heavenly world.

As it brooded over these mysterious relations, the Greek mind grappled with the idea of the infinite, and laboured to give it clear expression. A good example of this is afforded by Porphyry's allegorical interpretation of the Nymphs' cave in Homer's *Odyssey* :

A cave from all sun free,  
Cool and delightful, sacred to th' access  
Of Nymphs, whose surnames are the Naiades ;  
In which lay humming bees, in which lay thrown  
Stone cups, stone vessels, shittles, all of stone ;  
With which the Nymphs their purple mantles wove,  
In whose contexture art and wonder strove.

To which two entries were ; the one for man,  
On which the North breathed ; th' other for the gods,  
On which the South ; and that bore no abodes  
For earthy men, but only deathless feet  
Had there free way.<sup>1</sup>

According to this writer, the cave represents the world, which is in itself a thing apart. Outwardly inconspicuous, it is full of light within. From the south, through the gate of the gods, souls from the ethereal world enter upon the earthly pilgrimage at a place determined beforehand. The purple garments which the Nymphs weave out of such unpromising materials illustrate the corporeal life-blood with which the ethereal soul unites itself, until, through the Gate of the North, when this life has accomplished itself, it passes hence. In the Hellenistic mind such ancient traditions as that of the Nymphs' cave were cherished and developed, and the fantastic images thus evolved show how intimately men's views of life were bound up with, and how largely they were coloured by, the accepted cosmology. According to this, man, as a constituent element of the cosmos, was not simply a dweller upon the earth, but was also acted upon by intermediate beings, and aspired to the higher world of the gods. Meanwhile he saw himself exposed to vicissitude and danger, and recognized that judgement awaited him after death. Life here was an enigma to him, and his inner experience an alternation between hope and fear. How to get rid of his fears, secure the fulfilment of his hopes, and attain to the ethereal world of the gods—that was his all-engrossing problem, and it bristled with difficulties. The gods belonged to many categories—gods of earth and air and

<sup>1</sup> xiii. 96 ff., Chapman's translation.

highest heaven—and in their totality presented such a bewildering multiplicity that man felt himself hemmed in on every hand by a cordon of secret and controlling powers. Believing himself at their mercy, he was eager to win their favour and avert their wrath. But how?

*For the Hellenist Piety meant Torture.*

Recourse was had more particularly to those who specialized in the supernatural, namely, the priests and those initiated in the mysteries of secret cults, as well as witches, soothsayers, conjurers, and magicians, who were credited with the possession of power to effect miraculous cures, to exorcize dæmons, and to foretell the future. If even after giving to the directions of these guides the absolute obedience which they invariably required, the anxious soul found no remedy for his disquietude, he could only bow to a relentless Fate, or at best console himself with the possibility that the wheel of Fortune (Tyche) might turn in his favour. Hellenistic piety also expressed itself in the form of vows to the various gods in return for benefits bestowed. For instance, the sick man would offer to Asklepios an image of the bodily member restored to health, and the mariner an altar to the god who had preserved him from shipwreck. Religious privileges, in fact, were uniformly obtainable only at great cost, and the price exacted was not confined to a money payment, but included self-discipline as well. In accordance with the prevailing belief that the body is the source of all impurity, and that the soul can attain to the higher life of the gods only by being cleansed from the stain of

material things, elaborate penances (*e.g.* sprinkling with holy water, and anointing with oil previous to entering the sacred shrine) and purifications (*e.g.* so many days' abstention from certain meats, and from mourning) were demanded of all who would share in the sanctities of any secret cult. Along with the desire for external purity went the yearning after inward purity and ecstatic union with the divine. For this, as directed by oracles and esoteric cults, the mystic sought to qualify himself by the invocation of secret names, the drinking of holy waters, severe asceticism, etc. By following this arduous path he aspired to enter on a new life of fellowship with Deity in a higher world after death. The principle of rigid self-surrender thus lay deeply embedded in the religious life of Hellenism. Another direction in which the Hellenistic mind went out towards the supernatural is seen in the endeavour on the part of the individual, through the higher powers, to influence for good or evil the lot of other men. As applied to the latter case the word "piety" is of course somewhat of a misnomer, but it is used here of religious practice in the widest sense. Papyri recovered from the rubbish-heaps of Egypt contain not only rules for purification, but also numerous forms of adjuration, spells and curses. That a man's peace was thus threatened by a series of incalculable dangers is clear from these extant documents as well as from evidence contained in the *Characters* of Theophrastus, the *Lives* of Plutarch, and more particularly in his treatise on *Superstition*. For the pious Hellenist life became an almost insupportable nightmare. He went about terrified by dreams, muttering unintelligible oaths, dreading lest

he had partaken of food or drink proscribed by the gods, undergoing bodily privations in honour of the deity he worshipped, and even hastened to take priestly counsel should a weasel cross his path. The effort to be pious, in short, involved continual torture. Men "through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2<sup>15</sup>), and that to a degree scarcely intelligible to the modern mind. "We have never been thoroughly frightened; the ancient world was frightened; there is the great difference. . . . To such a mood the announcement of the resurrection of Jesus must have brought a thrill difficult for us to realize—the supreme Dread not only met, but actually defeated within the world men knew! We can understand too why the side of the new teaching which soon became pre-eminent amongst the Greeks was its promise of immortality (ἀφθαρσία)." <sup>1</sup>

### *Axioms of Hellenistic Piety.*

Was there, then, any unifying principle underlying these varied attempts to solve the problem to which Hellenistic piety everywhere addressed itself? Was there any common groundwork of ideas subsisting between those engaged in the quest? Undoubtedly there was. For one thing, it was a generally accepted principle that everything extraordinary is due to divine agency; hence the ceaseless anxiety to propitiate the gods. Again, it was universally recognized that every ruling power is essentially divine; hence the establishment by state enactment of the worship of kings through-

<sup>1</sup> Bevan, *Hellenism and Christianity*, p. 81 f.



out the Hellenistic world.<sup>1</sup> Another point on which there was agreement was that the distinction between right and wrong is no monopoly of any section of the human race. This doctrine of the Stoics was nowhere called in question.<sup>2</sup> The worship of the gods, too, was regarded as inevitable in every nation. Just as there was no people without rulers, so there was none without some form of divine worship. Finally, the pious combined with the desire for outward prosperity and inward purity the sense of responsibility in presence of the higher powers, with the result, however, that their fears were projected into the future. Their minds were much exercised about the fate awaiting them after death. In the magical rite of the Nekyia, "by which ghosts were called up and questioned about the future,"<sup>3</sup> we get an illuminating glimpse into the mythical conceptions entertained regarding a future state. According to the Homeric picture,<sup>4</sup> empty shades flit about here and there in the underworld, hankering after "the sacred blood," the tasting of which brings instant knowledge; and dreadful punishments—oppressive and unavailing toil like that of Sisyphus "in infinite moan," or endless woe like that of "tormented Tantalus"—are reserved for transgressors.<sup>5</sup> The moral significance afterwards attached to these mythical representations

<sup>1</sup> The idea was afterwards adopted by the Romans, and led to the apotheosis of the dead. Lucretius has no hesitation in describing Epicurus as a god.

<sup>2</sup> Origen, *c. Cels.* viii. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon, *s.v.*

<sup>4</sup> *Odyssey* (xi.).

<sup>5</sup> In sharp contrast to this is the Nekyia of Vergil (*Æn.* vi. 702 f.), in which prominence is given to the idea of ethical recompense, so that a man's future state is made contingent upon his conduct in the present life.

of the last things can be gathered from the Platonic dialogues, as well as from Plutarch's work, *Why the Deity is so long in punishing Transgressors*. All these things—the assumption that the worship of the gods is universal, and that it is necessary to propitiate them, the deification of kings, the recognition of the common sense of right and wrong, and “the dread of something after death”—are axiomatic in Hellenistic religion.

*Influenced by Current Philosophy.*

In the strenuous effort made to raise the manifold expressions of Hellenistic piety above the mists of superstition and necromancy the current Hellenistic philosophy naturally played an important part. That philosophy had, of course, its moral and religious side, and its later trend was all in the direction of emphasizing the Socratic teaching with respect to the worth of moral personality, the supreme importance of personal conviction in the sphere of religion, and the recognition of the ideal wise man as the standard of piety. Wide acceptance was given to the belief that all true knowledge (*γνῶσις*) is revelation, and at the same time the means by which, through the voluntary practice of virtue, man is able, as he is also in duty bound, to overcome all lower impulses, and attain not only to true manhood and the dignity of being a citizen of the world, but also to the perfection of Deity. This development of Hellenism in its ethical and religious aspects received a powerful impetus from the fact that the relation of contrast between the religious worship established by

the State and individual piety had been thrown into clear relief by the death of Socrates. Like a lightning-flash, this event had opened the eyes of the Hellenistic world to the essential distinction between the two things, with the inevitable result that personal piety became more and more detached from national religion. Even those who had adjudged the sage to die soon perceived their mistake, since his martyrdom only served to reveal the significance of his life as a force making for the amelioration of morals and for the purification of piety.

*Failure of Platonic and Stoic Ideas to create  
Religious Revival.*

In spite of considerable overlapping, two broadly marked developments are distinguishable in the philosophy of the period—the Platonic and the Stoic, the mystical and the ethical.

The piety of Plato comes chiefly to expression in his thoughts about life and death. His view of death as the soul's liberation from imprisonment in the body and as the gateway to pure blessedness constitutes it in reality an object of desire. And this was the attitude adopted by "the wise," who, instead of setting his heart on material things, made it his care to purge himself of all earthly dross, and to lay hold on the eternal treasures stored up in the world of ideas. The vision of this higher world, the true home of the soul, was his constant inspiration, and the possibility of such a redemption from the earthly and the sensual is already implied in the conception of death as the source of life

and only the starting-point of a new beginning to which Socrates is made to give utterance in the *Phædo* (xv.-xvii.). Without departing from his dualistic view of body and soul, Plato thus gave vitality and depth to the popular religious notions of his time. At once dualist and mystic, he became a lasting religious force. Later philosophical systems (Neopythagoreanism and Neoplatonism) were largely moulded by his influence, for although they became mixed up with the practice of divination and magic, they still owed to Platonism whatever of real momentum they possessed. At the same time the pure Platonic teaching was in large measure choked by the rank weeds that sprang up around it, and (not to say that in any case it was inherently capable of doing so) rendered powerless to bring about a real renaissance of religion.

In Stoicism it is the ethical note that is predominant. Its character as a pantheistic nature-religion did not extinguish in its adherents the true spirit of piety. For it the Reason that pervades the universe, along with its manifestations in the forces of nature (*λόγοι*), constituted virtually the one God controlling the whole. The world was made for man, who stands related to everything in it. He is a citizen of the world. To live in harmony with nature is to live in harmony with God. Mere outward observances are nothing worth; it avails only to be pure within. Recognizing that the world is ruled by providence, and rigorously suppressing the passions, the wise man, through the growth of right reason, rises superior to all the ills of life, and meets with unruffled calm all the strokes of Fate. He is at once a victor and invincible. While Stoicism did not

succeed in reconciling either providence and freedom or providence and fate, the writings of its principal representatives—Seneca and Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and Posidonius—show how earnestly it devoted itself to practical questions. The Stoic gospel—in so far as it can be called a gospel—was that of inner freedom to be reached only through strenuous toil; Stoic ethics was largely occupied with pointing out how this may be attained. A system that numbered amongst its adherents men like Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius cannot be set down as lacking either in piety or in apprehension of religious worth; and to this it has to be added that never has the question, “What is man?” been more worthily handled than by the exponents of Stoicism. And yet, as is proved by the chivalrous but vain attempt of Julian to make the old dry bones of paganism live, it failed to inaugurate a religious revival. This was reserved for Christianity, which served itself heir to such elements of the Stoic philosophy as it found germane to itself. As Platonism ultimately degenerated into the magic and theurgic arts practised by the school of Jamblichus, so Stoicism drifted into barren phraseology. “The dogmas of this philosophy were public professions, but did not alter the heart, and control the whole life. It was powerless as a moral lever to raise the people. The masses remained idolatrous and deeply superstitious.”<sup>1</sup>

Common to both systems was the fundamental error of attempting a task not within the compass of the human mind, and of working in essential ignorance of the truth that “salvation is of God.”

<sup>1</sup> Bryant, *op. cit.* p. 42 f.

*Wedded to Superstition.*

All efforts to dissociate religion from superstition proved fruitless. In several of his writings the high-minded and devout Plutarch vainly labours to make plain the path to fellowship with God on the basis of the traditional worship. The Stoics, too, did their best to prop up the popular faith. In accordance with their principle that everything in the world must be rational, they found the world-reason in the myths which formed the content of religion. By the use of allegory they contrived to remove what was offensive, to explain what was occult, and to harmonize the ancient mythology with the Stoic conception of the universe. Under this process Zeus was made to signify the æther, Hera the air, Prometheus providence, and so forth. The same method was applied to the Homeric poems in order to reassure those who were staggered at the wickedness therein attributed to the gods. It was maintained that while in countless instances Homer expresses his pious feelings in plain and simple terms, in the other cases referred to he really means the reverse of what he seems to say, and that, rightly interpreted, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are text-books of natural philosophy and ethics. Thus, for example, the darts of Apollo which carried pestilence into the Grecian camp<sup>1</sup> denote the scorching rays of the sun which breed pestilential vapours, and the descent of Ulysses to Hades<sup>2</sup> is intended to show that no obstacle is insurmountable to the wise. But as a means of arriving at religious certainty this white-

<sup>1</sup> *Iliad*, i. 23 f.<sup>2</sup> *Od.* xi.

washing of Homer in the interests of philosophy was even more futile than abstract speculation.

*Development of Divination and Astrology.*

In their perplexity men turned to the interpretation of dreams and the study of astrology by way of trying to pick the lock of heaven's decrees. "And till the Unknown has been realized as something terrible, till we have had the feeling of helplessness and ignorance in the face of an immense Universe, the feeling of a lost child in a huge strange city, we can hardly understand the mood which led men so eagerly to seek for 'knowledge' and catch at anything which seemed to promise them light and safety." <sup>1</sup>

The science of divination was developed with a view to supplying a necessary standard of interpretation. The diviner professed to convey knowledge of things hidden or future obtained by revelation from oracles, dreams, or portents, and calculated to solve difficulties and avert the anger of the gods in the case either of the individual or of the State. An interesting attempt was made by Artemidorus (c. B.C. 100) to give a scientific basis to the significance of dreams. On the authority of Homer <sup>2</sup> he divides them into two categories—those which are genuine vehicles of revelation, and those which are not. The former are divinely sent through the gates of horn, and bear witness to an all-embracing providence; the latter, which come through the gates

<sup>1</sup> Bevan, *Hellenism and Christianity*, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> *Od.* ii. 80 f.



of ivory, are mere illusions. By a painstaking investigation of concrete instances of dreams properly vouched for, he endeavours to make good their influence upon human destiny.

An equally important factor in Hellenistic piety was the practice of astrology, which was developed from the worship of the stars. In virtue of their claim to interpret the configurations and conjunctions of the stars, the professors of this "divine science," bolstering their abstruse calculations with whatever support could be derived from philosophy or mythology, assumed the rôle of fortune-tellers, who could be relied upon to give an accurate forecast of every man's lot. The assumption underlying this spurious wisdom is that in everything extraordinary the dæmons play a part. As they are concerned in dreams, so also they are concerned with the particular constellations under which men are born, and by which their character and destiny are fixed. To their malevolent influence must be traced the sufferings of humanity; should they show themselves benign, it is because they have been coerced by magic rites. While there is no uniformity of view regarding their nature and activity, the blame for any affront to Deity is always laid on them. Although to some philosophers of high repute, such as Plutarch and Porphyry, these ideas were abhorrent, they nevertheless persisted strongly in the Hellenistic world. The extent to which mundane destiny was supposed to be affected by the stars may be inferred from the constant polemic waged against this superstition by the Christian apologists some three centuries after Artemidorus. In Book iv. of the valuable work of Hippolytus († A.D. 235), *The Refutation of All*

*Heresies*, the art of the Chaldæans<sup>1</sup> in fixing the horoscope, their teaching concerning the action of the zodiacal signs, their astronomical calculations, etc., are discussed with the view of showing the futility of the theory of stellar influence. The pretensions of the magicians and theurgists of Babylon, who by their secret rites and incantations of dæmons and other illusions contrived to make men their dupes, are also mercilessly exposed.<sup>2</sup>

### *Epicurean Criticism of the Popular Religion.*

As the popular religion seemed to be hopelessly wedded to superstition, the shafts of criticism began to be directed against it. By bluntly declaring that the wise should trouble themselves as little about the gods as the gods trouble themselves about men, Epicureanism strikes at the root of religion itself, for such an attitude implies complete separation between the human and the divine. Consequently, the system of Epicurus is a philosophy of this life only; it takes no account of a life beyond. The object of this philosophy is to divest mankind of all fear of the supernatural, of death, and what may come after death.<sup>3</sup> Its primary

<sup>1</sup> The astrology of the Greeks was probably based on that of the Chaldæans. Some, however, are of opinion that it was derived from the Egyptians.

<sup>2</sup> Hippolytus ridicules the statements of the astrologers respecting the action of the zodiacal signs as "more deserving of laughter than serious contemplation" (iv. 6), and speaks of their arts generally as "notorious knavery" (iv. 7). The magicians he denounces as "corrupters of life" (iv. 24). He also characterizes the speculations of the Egyptians about God and nature, and their use of amulets as "earthly and grovelling wisdom" (iv. 45).

<sup>3</sup> See Boissier, *La Religion Romaine*, i. p. 277 ff.

aim is practical or ethical ; it seeks above all to furnish a way of life. At the same time it involves a change in moral values as stabilized since the time of Socrates. Love and kindness are reckoned as sheer weakness, and all religion as superstition. From the gods man has nothing to expect, and nothing to dread ; they exist, indeed, but do not concern themselves with human affairs. Epicureanism is not actively hostile to the gods ; it does not utter complaints against them after the manner of Euripides and other writers ; it simply ignores them. So far, however, from urging the abolition of religious usages, the Epicureans affirm the necessity of these for the people as setting before them an ideal of happiness. Their contention is that religion is nothing else than mythology, and that all attempts to impart to it a rational content are the misleading offspring of a perverted understanding.

*Lack of Power due to Inconsistencies.*

Like other national religions of the period, Hellenism presented a strange medley of the sacred and the profane. That superstition, cynicism, and unbelief should exist alongside of genuine devotion, and be content to practise the same religious rites, did not appear to the men of that age as an intolerable anomaly.<sup>1</sup> This is shown by the case of Alexander the Great, who, Plutarch tells us, held the truly religious sentiment that " God was the common Father of us all, but more particularly of the best of us," <sup>2</sup> [and yet] " when Alexander had once given

<sup>1</sup> See Note 8, p. 385.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Alexander.*

himself up to superstition, his mind was so preyed upon by vain fears and anxieties, that he turned the least incident, which was anything strange and out of the way, into a sign or a prodigy. The court swarmed with sacrificers, purifiers, and prognosticators."<sup>1</sup> So, too, inscriptions on tombs, while for the most part breathing a spirit of piety and hope, not seldom reflect blank infidelity, as thus: "I die against my will; whither I go, I know not." Many instances occur of prayers offered from the standpoint of a calculating utilitarianism which cynically strikes its bargain with the deity; the sore bestead warrior, for example, vows a temple provided the god whom he invokes will grant him victory. In few strokes Horace has limned for us the superstitious canter of his (somewhat later) day:

"Great Janus, Phœbus"—thus he speaks aloud:  
The rest is muttered all and unavowed—  
"Divine Laverna, grant me safe disguise;  
Let me seem just and upright in men's eyes;  
Shed night upon my crimes, a glamour o'er my lies."<sup>2</sup>

In sharp contrast to all this is the unfeigned piety shown in the exhortation of Pythagoras: "Ask thyself every night, wherein have I failed, what have I accomplished, what good deed remains undone?" and in the prayer of Socrates recorded at the close of the *Phædrus*:

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Alexander*.

<sup>2</sup> *Epistles*, i. 59 ff. (Conington's translation). Cf. Persius, *Sat.* 2:

Give me good fame, ye Powers, and make me just:  
Thus much the rogue to public ears will trust:  
In private then;—When wilt thou, mighty Jove,  
My wealthy uncle from this world remove?

(Dryden's translation.)

"O beloved Pan, and all ye other gods of this place, grant me to become beautiful in the inner man, and that whatever outward things I have may be at peace with those within. May I deem the wise man rich, and may I have such a portion of gold as none but a prudent man can either bear or employ." A further sample of real piety shines forth in the Hymn of the Stoic Cleanthes to Zeus: "Most glorious God, invoked by many names, O Zeus eternally omnipotent, the Lord of nature, ruling all by law, hail! . . . Thee will I hymn, and ever sing thy power."

Violent contrasts and glaring inconsistencies such as these gave to Hellenistic piety the character of an incongruous mixture, and so tended to deprive it of all vital power. Partly owing to the syncretistic combination of elements from foreign religions which accompanied the closer contact of East and West, and partly owing to the failure of the current philosophy either to recognize the limits of human genius or to cut itself adrift from traditional views of the cosmos, state-established religions lost their hold upon the masses of the people. Platonic idealism and Stoic morality gave place in large measure to the light-hearted pessimism which found expression in the Epicurean sentiment: "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." In the writings of Lucretius, as well as in the Satires of Persius and of Juvenal, this is the predominant note. "In the Hellenistic period of culture religion is certainly the ruling force, but its supremacy does not ripen religious intelligence and certainty; its influence is divisive rather than unifying; it cannot effect the divinely ordained connexion between faith and morality; it runs out

into phraseology, soothsaying, and theurgy. The prophetic word was fulfilled: 'They have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewn out for themselves broken cisterns'; they cannot find out the living wells." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heinrici, *op. cit.* p. 24 f.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SOCIAL LIFE IN THE HELLENISTIC WORLD.

#### *Under War Conditions.*

IN forming an estimate of life and manners in the Hellenistic period the first thing to be kept in view is that everything was conditioned by the fact that it was normally a time of war. Fighting had become the great business of the age.<sup>1</sup> Among the upper classes in particular there was only one profession—that of arms. This was their regular occupation, their sole industry. And it was prosecuted not merely or principally from the impulse of hatred or passion, but as a matter of deliberate policy. Success in war and success in life were regarded as convertible terms. Still, as in Homer's day, the most honoured man was the warrior. This necessarily gave tone and colour to the general outlook upon life, as well as to the conduct of affairs and the mutual relations among men. Socially, might was right, and promotion came only by valour in war. The recent ill-starred attempt of Germany to attain world-dominion by sheer force of arms, regardless of all considerations of right and justice, represents a deplorable relapse into, and

<sup>1</sup> According to Plutarch (*Life of Pyrrhus*) Lysimachus led his forces against Pyrrhus, as he had "secured his affairs, and had nothing to do!"



even in many respects an advance upon, the ruthless methods practised in the Hellenistic world more than two thousand years ago. Morality was at a low ebb; intemperance and polygamy were rife; men waded through blood to the throne—especially in Syria, one of whose kings at least (Demetrius) was an abandoned libertine. To judge by the proclivities of the age, Ares (=the Roman Mars) cannot have been viewed with the same repugnance as in the Homeric poetry, while Bacchus and Venus must also have ranked among the most popular deities.

*No longer Parochial.*

The upheaval in the ancient world caused by Alexander's conquests has been already referred to. But if there was destruction of the old order of things, this was only the necessary prelude to the establishment of the new. Everything was thrown into the melting-pot in order to its being remoulded in accordance with the larger conceptions of the times. And one of the most pronounced features of the new epoch was the disappearance of the partition walls formerly erected between different nationalities, as well as between different classes within the same nationality. The effect produced was like that seen in a cathedral in which through the removal of ugly accretions of lath and plaster the true beauty of the structure is revealed. Men felt life to be a far more spacious thing than they had known it to be hitherto. A few conservative-minded Greeks, mostly officials of the old order, out

of a short-sighted and mistaken patriotism, had from the first set themselves in opposition to the ideals of Alexander, and tried to prevent the fusion of nationalities which it was his aim to promote. But he knew how to deal with them, and it soon became apparent that, although they represented the principal city-states of Greece, they could not stem the flowing tide. After the demolition of Thebes, the Athenians, not venturing to rebel, became sullen and sarcastic. The men of Sparta, greatly daring, crossed swords with Antipater, Alexander's general in Greece. On this coming to the ears of Alexander he is reported to have said: "Macedonians, while we were conquering Darius out here, there seems to have been some battle of mice in Arcadia!" The five old ephors were incapable of discerning the signs of the times. Utterly fossilized, and joined to their idols in the shape of antiquated laws, they led their state into inevitable humiliation. While at Athens, Demosthenes and other oratorical patriots continued proudly to advocate the old provincialism, and to foster a fatuous opposition to the Macedonian supremacy, younger citizens of a more progressive spirit either renounced politics altogether, and took to trading, farming, or philosophy, or else migrated into the East. The day of parochialism had gone by.

*Marked by Sharp Contrasts.*

1. There was antagonism between Macedonians and Greeks, and in the circumstances this is not surprising. Proud of their ancient lineage, as well as of their learning

and culture, the Greeks deemed themselves the superior people, and yet in war they were no match for the men of Macedon. Their military inferiority they had perforce to acknowledge, but in other respects they ranked themselves higher than their conquerors. If the Jews plumed themselves upon being the *chosen*, the Greeks claimed to be the *choice* people, and reckoned their Macedonian neighbours as semi-barbarians. In their eyes Thracian strength was a much less precious thing than Hellenistic grace. We know how strongly Alexander and his leading generals desired the fusion of these qualities. Even in Philip's time, and before it, the kings of Macedonia had sought recognition as genuine Greeks, but their claim had never been definitely allowed. The Macedonians on their part regarded the Greeks with no small measure of contempt, and treated them with undisguised insolence. Eumenes, the Kardian who held the important post of Chief Secretary at the Court of Alexander, did not dare to enter Macedonia after the King's death, frankly observing that "as a foreigner it would be unbecoming in him to intermeddle in the private quarrels of the Macedonians."<sup>1</sup> Although by reason of his talents indispensable to them, he well knew that in their estimation he was simply a Greek adventurer. What formed the real barrier between the two peoples was their disparity in respect of culture, tastes, and manner of life. The Greeks were an educated race, mostly congregated in cities, and devoted to literature and art; the Macedonians occupied themselves with agriculture and the chase. There was great significance in the remark of Alexander to two Greeks

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Eum.*

at the fatal fracas during which he slew his old friend Klitus: "Do not the Greeks appear to you among the Macedonians like demi-gods among savages?" He spoke better than he knew. Towards the close of his career his successes in war drew out the savage in his nature, and the cultivated Hellenistic King was much less in evidence than the half-civilized despot.

2. Wealth and Poverty existed side by side. While Greeks in the homeland continued to cherish an anti-Macedonian spirit, many of their countrymen were serving the Empire abroad and amassing considerable fortunes. This led to a change in the economic condition of the mother-country. Successful emigrants began to return, and quickly bought up the land. With a largely increased circulation of money, prices rose to an unprecedented height. As in our own time, during and after the great European War, people who lived on fixed incomes became impoverished. Socialistic agitation followed, and likewise a transference of political power. Demosthenes, obliged to flee from Athens, took poison to escape falling into the hands of the Macedonians. After half a century of confusion there arose two powerful leagues which restored freedom to a large section of Greece. These were the Achæan League—originally a league of ten cities on the Peloponnesian coast, but subsequently embracing many more cities, including Athens and Ægina, but not Sparta—which strove to dislodge the tyrants set up by the Macedonian King Antigonus Gonatas, and the Ætolian League, formed by the shepherd tribes who occupied the region to the north of Achæa, and led a rustic life among the wilds of the most rugged territory in Greece. This league grew very

strong, extending its power over Lokris, Phokis, and Bœotia. How are we to account for the rise of these Leagues? The most probable explanation is that given by Mahaffy: "The cause must lie in the sudden increase of wealth among the Achæans and Ætolians, while the rest of Greece was gradually growing poorer."<sup>1</sup> It was chiefly among these rural tribes that Greek mercenaries were recruited for the wars, and when they came back laden with the spoils of the Orient, they naturally came to the front in the public life of Hellenistic Greece. Ætolian wealth was largely the product of plunder, but it enabled its possessors to create an atmosphere of public magnificence, to surround themselves with luxury, to develop strength, and to rise to importance in the world of their day, while their compatriots who remained at home were plunged into a monotonous existence, and felt the pinch of poverty.

3. In the Hellenistic world the earnest pursuit of philosophy was counterbalanced by a widespread and shallow frivolity. As the older schools of the Academy and the Stoa gradually waned, those of Zeno and Epicurus grew in popularity. The latter were not indeed so much philosophical as practical systems, aiming at happiness rather than knowledge as the great end to be achieved in life. According to the Epicureans, this is to be found in quiet contemplation, in reminiscence, and in friendship—the real antidotes to pain and poverty; and it is the function of philosophy to map out the course of reasonable and prudent enjoyment. While the Stoics also made happiness their object, they sought it not from a utilitarian standpoint, but through the stern

<sup>1</sup> *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 7.

discharge of duty, considering that in this way they could successfully defy adversity. To the pure Greek, with his instinct for delicate refinement and selfish enjoyment, the Epicurean ideal appealed more forcibly than the Stoic, which drew its adherents mainly from Asia Minor. There Greek and Oriental freely mingled, and the Stoic philosophy was the resultant product of the influence of Orientalism upon the new Hellenism. Another system of philosophy which emerged during the half-century of war which followed the break-up of Alexander's empire was that of Scepticism, which, though not taking rank as a distinctive school, played an important part in bringing about the final demolition of old and tottering creeds. Like the Epicureans, the Sceptics took nothing to do with politics, but held themselves aloof from public life. In their main object, which was the pursuit of happiness, they were at one with both Stoics and Epicureans, but they differed from them regarding the mode of attaining it. While the Epicureans and Stoics dogmatically assert that knowledge of the world and its laws is the basis of true tranquillity of soul, the Sceptics maintain that this can be reached only by repudiating all claim to knowledge, the possibility of which they doubt. Pyrrho of Elis, the first teacher of Scepticism, seems to have died about B.C. 270, and the nature of his teaching is known only through Timon of Phlius and others of his pupils. It amounted in brief to this, that as we can know nothing about the real nature of things, we can only withhold our judgement with regard to them, and take up an attitude of pure Scepticism. By doing so we arrive at mental imperturbability, which is the secret of true happiness. In its further development by the New



Academy, and in answer to the Stoics and Epicureans, it is denied that if knowledge is impossible, action is equally so, and maintained that probability is a sufficient basis for the conduct of practical life. Such was the spiritual result of the prolonged and purposeless wars in which the Diadochoi spent their life and wasted their energies. The best minds of the age felt constrained to seek satisfaction and contentment in inward contemplation and the cultivation of a temperate and quiet life.

But the serious side of Hellenism had its counterpart in the shallow levity which manifested itself not only in the social life of Athens, but also in that of the Hellenistic world as a whole. This is particularly reflected in the so-called New Comedy, in which comic poets shoot their arrows at the philosophers. Their leading representative is Menander, who is praised for neatness and grace of style. In his hands comedy became fashionable among the aristocracy, although Philemon, another comic poet, appealed more to the gallery. Only fragments of Menander's works are extant, but an idea of his spirit and aim may be gathered from the plays of Terence, nearly all of which are translations, adaptations, or combinations of those penned by his Greek model.<sup>1</sup> It is characteristic of the New Comedy that, while dealing platitudinously with trifling phases of Athenian life, it never occupies itself with any great theme or personality. Little information about the actual life of the times can be derived from Menander and his fellow-playwriters.

<sup>1</sup> "The plays are all based on the divorce court and the founding hospital, and, whatever the merits of character or dialogue, they are made intolerable as plays (whether in the Menander fragments or the Roman reproductions) by their complexity, improbability, and joyless immorality."—*The Spectator*, December 31, 1921, p. 892.



Of local colour in their writings there is little or none ; indeed the later comedy might have been acted in Egypt or Syria just as well as in Athens. Though scurrilously attacking prominent men, and jesting at morality, it studiously avoids the political issues of the time, and is "essentially domestic." For the most part, however, it handles only the seamy side of the home life of the period ; it gives prominence to intrigues with courtesans, and depicts marriage as absolute boredom. Thus in the *Thais* Menander devotes his highest powers to the delineation of an Athenian courtesan who swayed like an enchantress the frivolous society of the Grecian capital. Among other stock characters are such as the indulgent uncle, the stern or facile father, the youthful prodigal or spendthrift, the legal pettifogger, and the rollicking soldier of fortune. Out of these rather shoddy and hackneyed materials the Attic New Comedy "produced a whole literature of graceful talk, polite immorality, selfish ethics, and shallow character."<sup>1</sup> It was perhaps for the guidance of aspirants to the composition of such comedies that Theophrastus wrote his *Characters*, which are mostly sketches of those mean and contemptible vices that naturally cropped up in a society largely composed of idlers who liked to poke fun at the philosophers and all those inclined to take life seriously.

4. Noticeable also as a distinctive feature of the age is its modernism combined with a high appreciation of classic models. Politically and ethically it had completely severed itself from the past. The days of Pericles had already become archaic and remote. It never occurred to the up-to-date politician to seek from them

<sup>1</sup> Mahaffy, *op. cit.* p. 116.

inspiration or guidance in dealing with the newer issues awaiting solution in a world that had been so radically and strangely transformed. The whole machinery of government was altered ; former methods of administration were scrapped ; the times were changed, and men were changed with them. At no stage in their history had the Greeks been remarkable in point of moral elevation ; but in this respect, apart from the Stoics, the men of the Hellenistic period fell even below the standard hitherto observed. " The luxury, the literary criticism, the licence, the languor of the age are those of the most modern days, and of the most *blasé* society." <sup>1</sup>

With all this there was, however, a decided tendency to keep in view the shining models furnished by the past. The sculptor still imitated Pheidias and Praxiteles. The soldier's model was of course Alexander. Plutarch relates that in a hand-to-hand combat with the chief captain of Demetrius, who had proclaimed himself King of Macedon, Pyrrhus so acquitted himself that the Macedonians were full of admiration for his valour. " They thought his countenance, his swiftness, and his motions expressed those of the great Alexander, and that they beheld here an image and resemblance of his rapidity and strength in fight ; other kings merely by their purple and their guards, by the formal bending of their necks, and lofty tone of speech, Pyrrhus only by arms, and in action, represented Alexander." <sup>2</sup> The same writer also makes it clear that no orator could hope to rival him who had listened to Demosthenes. " There was one Kineas, a Thessalian, considered to be a man of very good sense, a disciple of the great orator Demosthenes, who of all

<sup>1</sup> Mahaffy, *op. cit.* p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Lives, *Pyrrhus*.

that were famous at that time for speaking well, most seemed, as in a picture, to revive in the minds of the audience the memory of his force and vigour of eloquence; and being always about Pyrrhus, and sent about in his service to several cities, verified the saying of Euripides, that

the force of words  
Can do whate'er is done by conquering swords."<sup>1</sup>

### *Trend towards City Life.*

One of the most marked features of Hellenism was the movement of large masses of the population from country districts into towns and cities. During the last half-century, although not on such an enormous scale, Great Britain has witnessed a similar transference. While still Premier, Mr. Lloyd George spoke of it as "a peril." With the solitary exception of Elis, where the well-to-do landowners by preference dwelt remote from towns, no district of Greece remained unaffected by the attractions of city life. Apart from Sogdiana, a region of Central Asia, Macedonia was perhaps the only country where the people did not yield to the popular tendency. The Macedonians were essentially an agricultural and military nation, with no leanings towards literature and art: the so-called pleasures and advantages of town life did not appeal to them. Although it had been Alexander's policy to discountenance rural life, they still clung to it, and in this respect declined to Hellenize themselves. But throughout Greece generally, as well

<sup>1</sup> Lives, *Pyrrhus*.

as in Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia, there was a rush from the country into the town, and an abandonment of rural ways in favour of the more exciting pursuits, the multifarious luxuries, and the athletic and theatrical entertainments afforded by the numerous cities which sprang up on every hand. As a result, trade grew, while agriculture decreased, in favour, and the inhabitants of the towns soon learned to look down upon the rough and boorish cultivators of the soil. Very significant in this connexion is the question put in *Ecclesiasticus*, a Palestinian work dating from c. B.C. 190–170,<sup>1</sup> and indirectly reflecting Hellenistic influences—“How shall he become wise that holdeth the plough . . . and whose discourse is of the stock of bulls?”<sup>2</sup> The sharpness of the contrast between the two modes of life is well illustrated also in the *Veneticus* of Dion Chrysostom,<sup>3</sup> in which he purports to receive kindness at the hands of two rustic families resident on the Eubœan coast, where he has suffered shipwreck. In this imaginative work he represents his hosts as occupied with farming and hunting, and as living a simple and virtuous life far from the din and bustle of crowded towns, and tells how one of them described to him the impressions derived from a first and only visit to the city. Not merely did he find the people loud and contentious in their manners generally; he had also a particular grievance. As an unsophisticated stranger from the

<sup>1</sup> As the translator arrived in Egypt in B.C. 132 (“in the thirty-eighth year when Euergetes was king”), and published his Greek translation shortly afterwards, the date given above may safely be regarded as that of his grandfather’s original (Hebrew) work.

<sup>2</sup> 38<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> No. VII. of his *Discourses*.

country he was treated with supercilious contempt, and victimized by unscrupulous profiteers. Although the tale is fictitious, it embodies an unquestionable truth—that rural life is a better nursing-ground than city life for such virtues as purity, integrity, and disinterested kindness. If in one sense Hellenism was strengthened, in another it was weakened, by the indiscriminate massing in large towns of the bulk of the population. The spread of Greek learning and culture may thereby have been greatly accelerated, but this result was achieved at the cost of moral degeneration.

### *Court Life.*

1. *Alexander's Court.*—As the son of Philip of Macedon, Alexander had been used to regal magnificence of no mean order, but this was as nothing in comparison to the subsequent splendour of his own Court. Plutarch tells us that after the battle of Issus he was much impressed by the sight of the captured tent of Darius. "When he had taken a view of the basins, vials, boxes, and vases curiously wrought in gold, smelled the fragrant odours of essences, and seen the splendid furniture of spacious apartments, he turned to his friends and said, 'This, then, it seems, it was to be a king!'"<sup>1</sup> At once he resolved to model his own appointments on the Persian scale, and fixed the expenses of his table at 10,000 drachmas (£400) daily. He also adopted Oriental dress and manners, and though only one of his generals, Peukestas, followed him in this, the Macedonian army "having once tasted the treasures

<sup>1</sup> Lives, *Alexander*.

and the luxury of the barbarians, hunted for the Persian wealth with all the ardour of hounds upon scent.”<sup>1</sup> It was probably in large measure owing to the marriages he contracted with two Oriental princesses that he was further led to surround himself with Persian officers and pages, who, moreover, as war captives, were likely to be much more obsequious in their homage than the Macedonians with their chronic tendency to discontent, and even to claim for themselves the credit of his conquests.

It is worthy of note that Alexander established a daily Court journal (ἡμερησίῳ)—a novel feature in those days—and that to this source we owe the minute account given by Arrian and Plutarch of his last hours. His business-like conduct of affairs was shown, too, in his habit of sending to his mother and to Antipater dispatches containing elaborate reports concerning current events in his life.

From these it became apparent that his ideas of recreation differed materially from those of the Greeks. He cared little for athletic games, and had no inclination towards the ascetic manner of life requisite in order to excel in gymnastic sports. To him these things appeared dull and tame compared with the exciting joys of the chase. Retaining thus the Macedonian delight in hunting, he likewise indulged in the evening carousals customary among Macedonian sportsmen. The social hour, the flowing cup, and the boastful tale had for him an irresistible attraction, and if on the one hand he developed the manly qualities usually associated with the pursuit of field sports, he was also on the other

<sup>1</sup> Lives, *Alexander*.



hand often guilty of the coarse excess of the Thracian reveller.

Were the Macedonian kings constitutionally invested with absolute power? The answer is not perfectly clear. According to some historians (*e.g.* Grote), their power was absolute; at their own will they could inflict punishment, torture, or death, like any old Greek "tyrannos." Others point to the assembly of free Macedonians as setting a limitation to this power; but as it lay with the king to call this assembly, he was virtually free to decide in particular cases if so minded. In practice, however, such a gathering of soldiers and "companions" was frequently called to give a verdict in cases of life or death. It may seem curious that Alexander, who did not hesitate on occasion to exercise absolute power, should also have referred many decisions to a convocation of his principal men; but Niebuhr is probably correct in his surmise that those who, like the Frankish kings, were really limited monarchs within their own proper domain, were absolute rulers over conquered territories.

2. *Courts of the Diadochoi.*—For some time after Alexander's death his generals kept up a pretence of loyalty to his house, but after Casander had rid himself of the widowed Roxana and her thirteen-year-old son, in order to secure his own succession to Macedonia, they threw off the mask and fought for their own hand. In B.C. 306 all the great satraps assumed the title of "king," once so repugnant to the Greeks. Ultimately, in B.C. 301, the Empire was partitioned amongst five rulers with sovereign power, namely, Antigonos in Phrygia, Seleucus in Babylon, Ptolemy in Egypt,



Lysimachus in Thrace and Bithynia, and Casander in Macedonia and Greece. Further wars, however, ensued ; the ambitious designs of Antigonus, who aimed at seizing the whole Empire, were crushed by his rivals ; and the remaining four generals then divided the vast inheritance amongst them.

A prominent characteristic of the times was the custom of forming or strengthening alliances by diplomatically arranged marriages. Alexander's example in contracting marriages with foreigners was widely followed. Rival and combatant kings were in this way suddenly converted into relations and friends ; but although by this means peace was often concluded between warring lords, these marriages proved no effectual barrier to the outbreak of fresh conflicts. Unsettlement and turmoil were the order of the day.

Another baneful feature of the period is exhibited in the constant assassinations which marked the succession of kings and the course of empire. To give only a few examples, Alexander's mother, Olympias (after a mock trial), was murdered by Casander, and the son of Casander by Demetrius ; the eldest son of Lysimachus, the children of Arsinoë, daughter of Ptolemy Soter and Berenice, and Seleucus I. Nicator, were all assassinated by Ptolemy Keraunos ; while Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II., was put to death by the first wife of Antiochus II. No prince or princess, no king or heir to a throne, was safe from conspiracy, not to speak of the assassin's knife.

Many of the tragedies which blackened the Court of the Macedonian kings directly resulted from their practice of polygamy and concubinage, and from the

fact that their illegitimate children took rank with the nobles and were regarded as eligible for the succession to the throne. The relations of the nobility to the sovereign were such that they felt themselves honoured in acting as his personal servants, and in placing their children at Court as companions and pages to the king, to vie with each other in rendering him the most trifling service.

In the settlement of differences regarding public affairs, or in the matter of establishing or renewing friendly international relations, the method of sending formally accredited embassies was widely adopted, and the more critical the situation the more elaborate was the ceremonial observed. It was not uncommon for several of such embassies to be present at Rome or Alexandria at the same time, and they seem to have always met with a courteous reception and a respectful hearing.<sup>1</sup> Those who brought gifts and compliments to Court were, however, often hostile at heart, and the apparent cordiality with which they were welcomed was no true index of the sentiment entertained towards them.

### *Private Life and Manners.*

Unfortunately, we are very imperfectly informed with regard to the domestic and family life of Hellenism, the recorded evidence being limited for the most part to the public life of the period. But there can be no

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the account in 1 Macc. 8 of the treatment given to the two Jewish ambassadors sent by Judas Maccabæus to conclude a treaty with the Romans.

doubt that the contradictions and contrasts so apparent on the stage of history existed also within the narrower circle of the home. Kindness and cruelty, courage and cowardice, superstition and scepticism often lodged under the same roof.

Among the worst features of domestic life was the virtual enslavement of women. In this respect the Hellenistic world contrasts unfavourably with the state of matters prevailing amongst Jews, Persians, Egyptians, and even Greeks of an earlier date. Recently discovered papyri, for instance, reveal the comparative independence of women in Egyptian society. To a Greek of the third or second century B.C. a woman was only an infant under the tutelage of her father, brother, husband, or other male relation, as the case might be ; but in Egypt a married woman could hold property or enter into contracts in her own name. Faithlessness on the part of a husband rendered him liable to make financial reparation. Latterly, in the reign of Ptolemy Philopator, the husband was even ordained by royal rescript to sanction every legal act of the wife. All this gave to Egyptian women a degree of freedom and a social standing not enjoyed by those of their conquerors.

Another blot upon Hellenistic family life was the exposure of newly born infants, particularly females.<sup>1</sup> Few of them indeed were left to perish, but those who rescued and reared them were usually slave-dealers, who aimed only at their own profit, with no ulterior intention of furnishing future mothers for the State.

<sup>1</sup> An extant letter from a husband at Oxyrhynchus runs thus : " When—good luck to you—your child is born ; if it is a male, let it live ; if a female, expose it."

According to Polybius, Greece in his time was suffering from a disastrous decrease in population, owing to the disinclination of married persons to undertake the up-bringing of more than one or two children "whom they can provide for richly and bring up in idle luxury."<sup>1</sup> This inhuman custom, not unknown in modern times,<sup>2</sup> was directly due to the desire to grasp at life's pleasures while declining its responsibilities, as well as to an ignoble aversion to hard work and frugality. It is possibly unsafe to infer from the frequent allusions to this practice in the New Comedy that it was at that period anything like so widespread as represented in theatrical plays, but at any rate the witness of Polybius must be accepted as conclusive with regard to his own later time.

As reflected in the mirror of the New Comedy, the *morale* of the age presents some peculiarly obnoxious features. Evidently there was a general lack of public spirit among the more educated classes, who for the most part lived in utter indifference to the political problems of the day, sometimes migrating to foreign lands, and sometimes remaining as mere contemptuous idle loafers, with little interest in literature or serious thought.<sup>3</sup> At the same time the proletariat of Athens had become the

<sup>1</sup> xxxvii. 9.—Although this applies to the upper and middle classes, Dean Inge very properly points out that "the depopulation of rural Greece can hardly be so accounted for."—*Outspoken Essays*, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* it is "far more widespread amongst the Chinese than is commonly believed."—Sven Hedin, *Through Asia*, ii. p. 1245. This writer thinks it is "possibly . . . a result of the peculiar social circumstances."

<sup>3</sup> "These cared little whether Casander, Polysperchon, Demetrius, or Demochares ruled the agora, provided plenty of salt fish came from Pontus; fine wheat from Egypt, and the demi-monde kept them amused with their beauty and their wit."—Mahaffy, *op. cit.* p. 127.

dupes of socialistic agitators, and looked for the means of subsistence not to their own industry, but to the exploitation of foreign politics. And worse still lay behind. So corrupt were the relations of the sexes that family life was often poisoned at the source, while even old men encouraged and partook with their own sons in flagrant vice.

Still another unlovely feature of the age has to be mentioned—the prevalence of suicide. Men were everywhere extraordinarily ready to act upon the suggestion of Epictetus that “the wise man should walk out of his house if the chimney smokes.” That this method of release from the ills of life should have been so commonly adopted is probably due to the tyrannical oppression of which men were so often the victims; and that it should have met with such general approbation is largely traceable to the Stoic teaching that it afforded to the wise man a way of escape from greater evils than torture and death, which could not deprive of his happiness the man who had “found peace.”

Dark as was the condition of life and manners in the Hellenistic world, it would be a mistake to represent it as having no redeeming features. Although its vices have been thrown into the limelight more than its virtues, it must not be inferred that the latter were non-existent. That a higher civilization was being evolved may be gathered from a variety of illuminating facts. For example, there is reason to believe that, alongside the brutal violence which stained the Court life of the age, the life of the ordinary citizen, at least in the intervals of war, was marked by increased refinement and urbanity of manners. This was the natural

effect of the Epicurean philosophy, according to which happiness could be found only in avoiding the excitement and flurry inseparable from wranglings, agitations, and disputes. But what contributed even more perhaps to such a result was the fact that the courts of the Hellenistic kings had become schools of politeness and formal etiquette. Men were taught to bridle their tongues, and in their mutual intercourse even kings who were at enmity behaved towards one another with calculated courtesy. The observance of ceremony was such that rival princes were treated better than subjects. It is therefore not surprising that the Roman bluntness used by Popilius Lænas towards Antiochus iv., when he drew his famous circle in the sand, was repellent to the Hellenistic sense of what was due to good manners, international courtesy, and rational diplomacy.

Again—to mention another sign pointing in the same direction—the outcry raised against the destruction of works of art by invading armies as contrary to the recognized rules of chivalrous warfare is in itself sufficient testimony to the value generally attached to the amenities of life. Throughout the Hellenistic world it was customary to adorn public places with numerous statues in bronze or marble, and the vandalism practised by the Gauls in desecrating tombs and mutilating temples, and later by the Romans in carrying away the finest art treasures of subjugated territories, could only excite the utmost abhorrence in the mind of a Greek. To him it was an outrage upon decency of which only rude “barbarians” could be capable. And if the Hellenists set so much store by the embellishment of their cities, it is reasonable to suppose that their feeling for art



manifested itself also within their own homes. It is difficult to think of their private dwellings as bare and unadorned, and we may fairly conclude that wherever possible these would contain their quota of earthenware, pictures, statuary, and other articles of vertu. Indeed it can hardly be doubted that, as compared with the days of the old city-states, home life, alike from the point of view of morals and refinement, showed a distinct improvement. Not only were slaves treated less harshly, but they were oftener set at liberty. Thanks to the teaching of the Stoics, there was also a higher standard of duty, and more real religion. If belief in the ancient mythology had to a large extent been undermined, this was more than compensated for by a growingly serious attitude towards the practical duties of life. Furthermore, if the latter-day Hellenist could not boast the intellectual culture of the classical period, his horizon was wider, and his outlook more cosmopolitan.

#### *Education and Amusements.*

About B.C. 300 the cult of gymnastics began to decline, and more importance to be attached to the training of the mind. The *Epheboi* (the technical designation for youths who had attained to manhood) found recognition as a distinct section of the community. They practically corresponded to university students. They wore a distinctive dress, organized themselves in clubs, and issued resolutions as a corporate society. Special privileges, including reserved seats in the theatre, were publicly decreed to them, while their preceptors were



held in honour. At the gymnasia in Athens the curriculum was shortened by the omission of a large part of the physical training heretofore in use, attention being given mainly to letters and "music" (in the broad Greek sense). It is significant that a teacher of language or of singing was paid at a higher rate than a gymnastic trainer or a fencing-master. The institution of competitive examinations with prizes led to a greater specialization of teaching, separate masters being made responsible for each department of instruction. Nor were ephebic institutions by any means confined to Athens. Extant inscriptions show that they existed in some sixty other cities scattered over the Hellenistic world, and there must have been very many more of which no record remains.

At this epoch the old order underwent many changes. Not only was there a decided reversal in the relative importance attached to physical and mental training, but also within both of these departments of instruction material alterations were introduced. In the military sphere, with the growing perception of the superiority of earthworks to stone ramparts, as a means of fortification, "artillery practice" (*καταπέλταφεία*) came more into vogue. So also on its literary side education underwent a notable change. Rhetoric, which heretofore had been reckoned the principal thing, now fell into decay, and was deemed merely an artificial embellishment.

In contrast to the neglect into which oratory had fallen, an extraordinary passion for dramatic and musical entertainments took hold of the public mind. This was indeed a leading feature of the age. Every little town had its theatre, in which, at festivals held in honour of

Dionysos and other deities, elaborate performances, including vocal and instrumental music, as well as stage-plays, were regularly carried through. Extant inscriptions attest the prevalence of these *Dionysia* throughout the Hellenistic world, and even in Upper Egypt. Professional actors were now designated "artists attached to the god Dionysos," and enrolled in guilds, the members of which were exempt from taxation and from military service. In addition to their salaries, which were considerable,<sup>1</sup> valuable prizes were given in the case of competitive plays. It is interesting to note that, contrary to the ancient practice, the rewards of all classes of performers far exceeded those given to the composer, and that in fashionable circles it was not the original author, but the skilful actor or artiste, whose society was courted. "No great festival, except the four national ones, was thought complete without the presence of these artists, and in the end musical contests came in even at the Pythian and Nemean games." ■

<sup>1</sup> Tragedians were paid at a higher rate than comic actors. An inscription records that at Corcyra a "company" of actors (comic and tragic) received 50 minæ (about £200) for their services, while, according to Diodorus (xx. 108), Antigonos on learning of the invasion of his territory by Lysimachus hastily abandoned the splendid inaugural festival of his new capital, Antigoneia, on the Orontes, but paid the artistes an enormous fee of 200 talents (£48,750).

■ Mahaffy, *op. cit.* p. 384.



PART II.  
THE JEWISH HELLENIST PHILO OF  
ALEXANDRIA.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

### *The Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy.*

THIS is the name usually applied to the strange eclectic philosophy which resulted from the fusion of Greek thought and Jewish religion on Alexandrian soil during the two centuries immediately prior to the Christian era. It exhibits a peculiar combination of belief in a personal God with the Platonic doctrine of Ideas, and may be described as the concrete historical embodiment of the spirit of both races. On the one hand, it conceived the "Ideas" of the Platonic philosophy as dwelling in a distinct personality—that of the Lord of hosts; and, on the other, its conception of God was much more philosophical than that of the early Hebrews. While owing its intellectual form to the philosophy of the Greeks, it derived its vitality from Judaism. The Jew who embraced it did not relinquish his devotion to the Mosaic law; rather did he adopt the dialectic of Plato and Aristotle as a means towards a more adequate conception of the traditional Hebrew faith, and as an aid to its defence and wider diffusion.

This mingling of Greek philosophy with Semitic religion represents a curious and interesting phase of thought. Among its chief characteristics are its fondness for abstract terms and its florid rhetoric; its ponderous erudition and its want of true originality;

its lack of historic sense and its indifference to facts; its utter incapacity to appreciate the simple, natural meaning of Scripture, and its far-fetched, fantastic moralizing; its dreamy fancifulness, unaccompanied by real speculative power; and its mystic veneration for ancient writings, joined to an absolute inability to reject new ideas from any quarter. Inevitably it thus became a confused medley of previous philosophies and contemporary ideas, loosely co-ordinated and often whimsically combined. In the course of two centuries this Jewish-Greek philosophy developed a technical vocabulary of its own, as well as a unique method of Old Testament interpretation, which Philo, the only representative of this school whose writings have to any considerable extent been preserved, found ready to his hand, and still further elaborated.

Although the religious content of the Christian revelation was prepared by the prophets and psalmists of the Old Testament, its dogmatic framework was largely furnished by the Jewish-Greek philosophy. In carrying out their object of spiritualizing Israelitish traditions so as to harmonize them with the idealism of the Greek philosophy, the Jewish Hellenists laboured to give to the relative views an intellectual and scholastic form by means of the abstract ideas, allegorism, and dialectic method in use among the Greeks. The unitive conception of the world thus evolved, and specially associated with the name of Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, and for a part of his life a contemporary of Jesus and of Paul, was the vessel into which the new wine of Christianity was poured. It was nothing more. As an antagonist of Jewish scepticism, Chaldæan astrology,



and Egyptian heathenism, Philo was in high repute with cultured Christians in the early centuries of our era, but there is nothing to show that he ever either adopted Christianity or paid any heed to it. In his writings, however, we see "what a field of spiritual seed was everywhere ripening for Christianity after the productive accumulations of the last sultry centuries,"<sup>1</sup> and it is fitting that before proceeding to discuss the relation of Christianity to Hellenism we should take a preliminary survey of this field. "In reading Philo we are on the edge of Christianity."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ewald, *Hist. of Israel*, vii. p. 231 (Eng. trans.).

<sup>2</sup> Jowett's essay on *St. Paul and Philo*.

## CHAPTER I.

### LIFE, CHARACTER, AND WRITINGS OF PHILO.

#### *Philo's Life and Character.*

THE precise year of Philo's birth is not known, but since he went to Rome at the head of a deputation of Alexandrian Jews, who were all old men, in A.D. 40, it may be inferred that he was born not later than c. B.C. 20. Although his brother Alexander held the lucrative office of alabarch, or chief farmer of taxes on the Arabian side of the Nile, he himself cared nothing for riches, and lived the life of a pure scholar. Deeply imbued with racial feeling, and loyal to Jewish custom, Philo did not fail to visit the Holy City. In the *de Providentia* he mentions having travelled to Jerusalem "in order to pray and offer sacrifices there." His careful description of the Temple and its worship in the *de Monarchia* argues a profound veneration for his ancestral faith. Possessed from his earliest years with a consuming desire for knowledge, Philo speaks of having been later in life "thrown upon the great sea of political cares," and thanks God that he has not been "swallowed up in the abyss."<sup>1</sup> Of his political activities, however, nothing is known beyond the episode of his appearance before the Emperor Caligula at Rome in support of the

<sup>1</sup> *De Spec. Leg.* iii. 1 ff.

petition of the Alexandrian Jews to be exempted from paying him divine honours as being inconsistent with their own worship. He and his fellow-deputies were unsuccessful in their suit. After hearing, for form's sake, both them and their accusers, Caius angrily upbraided them as enemies of the gods, insultingly asked them why they abstained from swine's flesh, and finally dismissed them as imbeciles more to be pitied than blamed. It seems probable, however, that the case went to a second hearing, at which the learned Apion, fortified with a copy of his pronouncedly anti-Jewish *History of Egypt*, figured as the chief opponent of the Alexandrian Jews, and obtained a decision against them. At all events the embassy had to leave Rome in hot haste, and Alexander the Alabarch was cast into prison. With regard to Philo's subsequent life we possess no authentic information.

In this illustrious Jewish Hellenist we light on an exceptionally frank and engaging personality. He has a pleasant way of opening his heart to his readers, and taking them into his friendly confidence. His mental alertness is equalled by his transparent sincerity, and his tireless diligence in study by his eager devotion to high ideals. One cannot peruse his writings without a certain consciousness of exhilaration in the companionship of a spirit so able, so refined, so unworldly, and so pure. In Philo earnestness and catholicity are attractively combined with an intuitive faculty of moral and spiritual perception, and a well-balanced, spotless character. His deep sense of the beauty of light (*De Abr.* 156 ff. ; *De Ebriet.* 44) and his keen interest in watching the budding forth of vegetation in spring (*Quod Deus sit*

*immut.* 38 f.) testify to his love of Nature ; and that he was well abreast of the natural sciences of his time is indicated by, for example, his repeated references to the laws of astronomy. Every reader of Philo must be struck also with the width of his culture. *À propos* of this, we are indebted to Professor H. A. A. Kennedy for these illuminating sentences :

“ Music appeals to him, and he has some knowledge of harmony (e.g. *De Post. Cain.* 105 f. ; *De Cherub.* 110). He has an intimate acquaintance with the athletic festivals of the Græco-Roman world, and has studied the efforts and aims of the competitors (e.g. *De Agric.* 111 ff. ; *De Cherub.* 81 ff.). He has frequented the theatre, and carried away clear, shrewd impressions (*De Ebriet.* 49 ff.). He is a man of general cultivation, who has felt the charm of the great art of Pheidias (*De Ebriet.* 89), and can make apt quotations from Homer and Euripides when occasion calls. He shows a thorough knowledge of the ordinary curriculum of Greek education, and is able to discuss its details with insight (e.g. *De Ebriet.* 49 ff. ; *De Congress. Erud.* 15 ff. ; *De Somn.* i. 205). He reveals a quite definite interest in medicine (e.g. *Quod Deus sit immut.* 65 f. ; *De Sacrif. Ab.* 123), and Bréhier believes that he had taken a medical course (*Les Idées phil. et relig. de Philon*, p. 286 and n. 6).

“ His outlook upon ordinary life is sane and penetrating. He has reflected much on politics, and his remarks on the statesman (e.g. *De Joseph.* 32 ff., 54 ff.) are the well-weighed product of ripe observation. He gives vivid, caustic estimates of the familiar figure of the sophist (e.g. *De Congr. Erud.* 67 f. ; *Quod det. pot.* 72 f. ; *De Agric.* 136). He is aware of the vulgar extravagances

of the wealthy (*De Fuga*, 28 ff.), and of the follies of reckless luxury (*De Somn.* ii. 48 ff.). And the pointed appeal which he makes to moneylenders as a class lifts the veil from a corner of the social life of the time.”<sup>1</sup>

Philo's high moral character is evidenced by the severity of the standard laid down by him for the regulation of conduct in practical life. “Those who are not entirely uneducated,” he says, “would rather be blinded than see things which they ought not, be deafened than hear injurious words, and have their tongue cut out to prevent them from giving utterance to anything that ought not to be spoken” (*Quod det. pot.* i. 224). And again he affirms that it is the end and aim of our existence to say and do everything so as to please the Father and King, to follow him in the ways which the virtues prepare, and to become like our Parent, God (*De Opif. Mund.* i. 34 f.). The nobility of Philo's character, and his invincible attachment to Judaism, are also clearly reflected in the politico-historical treatises *In Flaccum* and *De Legatione ad Caium*. Persecution could not daunt him. “We accept death with joy” [he says], “as if we were receiving immortality, rather than allow any of the customs of our ancestors to be touched” (*Leg. ad Caium*, 16). Such an exhibition of the martyr spirit stamps with veracity both his own statement that he “desired to live a pure life free from vices,” and a recorded saying of his wife, who, at a gathering of women of high social standing, when asked why she alone wore no jewels of gold, replied that she wished for no ornament other than the virtue of her husband.

<sup>1</sup> *Philo's Contribution to Religion*, p. 12 ff.

*Extant Writings of Philo.*

Even if we deduct as spurious several treatises sometimes ascribed to Philo, these number at least fifty. Most of them, however, are only sections of a few comprehensive works, none of which have been preserved entire. The great majority treat of the Pentateuch. They comprise (1) *Quæstiones et solutiones in Genesin et Exodum*, an incomplete work in the form of a catechism, giving the literal as well as the deeper allegorical sense of the sacred text. (2) An elaborate and (in Philo's estimation) scientific *Commentary on Genesis*, written for cultured Hellenistic Jews, and in which the allegorical meaning alone is unfolded, somewhat after the method of the rabbinical Midrash, with the result that the historical narrative is ingeniously transformed into a system of psychology and morals. The persons who figure in the history are viewed as denoting the various types of character and conditions of soul prevailing among men. Cain, for instance, is the type of selfishness, Abel of saintliness, Noah of righteousness, Esau of sensuality, Rebecca of patience. A minute analysis of the relations in which these different states of soul stand to each other, to the material world, and to God, is then made the basis of the ethical teaching which it was Philo's chief aim to impart. This is his principal work, but probably owing to its excessive length and frequent wearisomeness, it was at an early date cut up into separate fragments and issued under a variety of names. (3) A popular digest of the Mosaic legislation for pagan readers. Of the three sections comprised in

this, the first deals with the creation of the world, which is given the foremost place by Moses with the view of showing that his legislative enactments conform to the will of nature, so that he who obtempers them is really a citizen of the world. The second part treats of the lives of good men who in the pre-Mosaic period were the living embodiment of the same laws afterwards codified by Moses. The seven selected are Enos, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph as preparing the transition to the Mosaic period. The concluding part of the work treats of the law itself, beginning with the Ten Commandments, and thereafter describing the particular laws belonging to each of these. In this, the lengthiest as well as the "most matured and attractive of his works,"<sup>1</sup> the allegorical method is but sparingly used. The writer's aim throughout is to represent the laws of Moses as the best ever promulgated.

It seems probable that these three principal works on the Pentateuch were produced substantially in the order named.<sup>2</sup> (4) A number of separate treatises, including *Vita Mosis*, *Quod omnis probus liber*, *In Flaccum*, and *De Legatione ad Caium*. The two last mentioned are the only extant historical works from Philo's pen. The way in which the one begins and the other ends shows that originally they formed only parts

<sup>1</sup> Ewald, *op. cit.* vii. p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Ewald and Herriot regard (1) as older than (2); Dähne takes the opposite view; Schürer holds that there is internal evidence in both works to show that (1) is partly earlier and partly later than (2). According to Herriot (1) represents a transition stage in Philo's literary activity—that which was preceded by treatises largely inspired by Greek culture, and followed by the Pentateuchal works (2) and (3).



of a larger whole.<sup>1</sup> Their common theme is the persecution suffered by the Jews, particularly at Alexandria, in the reign of Caligula. Written with graphic detail and first-hand knowledge, they are important sources for the history of the period, both Jewish and Roman. The aim of these treatises is not, however, purely historical; they are meant to surround the Jewish people with a halo of glory as the protégés of heaven. After acknowledging the wise and impartial rule of Flaccus under Tiberius, the writer traces his subsequent deterioration of character and its effect upon his administration. In the abstract statement which marks the transition from praise to censure—namely, that “while failure can be pardoned in one who has failed because he knew no better, he who wittingly fails is without excuse; he is judged before the bar of his own conscience”—we see the hand of the Jewish Hellenist. The distinction between deliberate and unintentional sin is Hebraic, but the appeal to conscience is Greek. The growing change for the worse in Flaccus after the accession of Caligula is psychologically explained as the result of his giving heed to evil advisers who represented to him that his best policy would be to court the favour of the Alexandrians, and that the surest way to gain this would be to let them ill-treat the Jews—ostensibly for disregarding the edict that the Emperor should be worshipped as divine. Placed thus at the mercy of their

<sup>1</sup> According to Schürer, the entire work consisted of (1) a general introduction, (2) an account of the oppressions in the reign of Tiberius by Sejanus in Rome and by Pilate in Judæa, (3) the treatise against Flaccus, (4) the *De Legatione ad Caium*, (5) the *παλινωδία*, i.e. the change for the better which took place in the lot of the Jews after Caligula's death.

enemies, the Jews were deprived of their civic rights as well as of their religious liberties. Houses were pillaged and workshops dismantled ; heads of the Jewish community were scourged in the market-place, and multitudes tortured irrespective of either age or sex ; the numerous synagogues became the prey of the mob, some being plundered, others burnt, and others desecrated by images of the Emperor. The unlooked-for arrival of " King " Agrippa roused the jealousy of Flaccus, and still further embittered him against the Jews. A written complaint addressed by them to the Emperor was suppressed by Flaccus, but transmitted by Agrippa. In spite of his base bid for popularity, avenging justice began to dog the heels of Flaccus. On the expiry of his period of office he was arrested, sent to Rome, and subsequently banished to an island of the Ægean, where he was done to death by hired assassins. In all this Philo sees the hand of God extended to help the Jews. But the situation was not relieved by the recall of Flaccus. Relying on Caligula's known antipathy to the Jews, the Alexandrians continued to victimize them until in their desperation they determined to plead their cause at Rome itself. The *De Legatione ad Caium*, which tells the story of the futile appeal to Rome, is in fact a piece of special pleading, the work at once of a Jewish advocate and a clever psychologist.

*Popularity of Philo's Writings in his own Day.*

This is easily accounted for. Thoughtful, cultured, and dignified, they represent the high-water mark of

what was then possible in religious literature uninspired by Christianity. There is much in them that savours almost of New Testament teaching—for example, the habitual designation of God as Father, the expression given to lofty ideals of self-sacrifice, and the principle that true riches are stored up in heaven. When it is further borne in mind that the Alexandrian allegorism as practised by its chief exponent does sometimes lead him to heights of spirituality comparable to those set before us in the New Testament, there is nothing surprising in the fact that his works were widely read in Christian circles, and that in the course of a few generations he was ranked almost with the Greek Church Fathers.

With all his spirituality Philo is, nevertheless, singularly insensitive to the national aspirations of his race. He is content with Judaism as taught by the rabbis of his day. The Messianic hope hardly comes within his purview. Not only does his academic life in Alexandria open up other avenues for his thoughts, but his persistent use of allegory blinds him to the significance of Old Testament prophecy. He does indeed identify the Messiah with the Logos, and speaks of His coming once more to deliver the nation as formerly under Moses, but for him such a hope is only a kind of heavenly dream, and not something to be realized "on the earth and in history." He specifies repentance as necessary in order to the fulfilment of Jewish hopes; but in laying still greater stress upon the merits and intercession of the Patriarchs he is simply joining in the popular boast of descent from Abraham, which the Baptist so bluntly

sweeps aside as no proper substitute for repentance. The truth is that to a man of Philo's bent of mind Christianity was unintelligible. And yet, as we shall see, he exercised a decided influence upon Christian thought.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE TASK WHICH PHILO SET HIMSELF.

#### *Fusion of Judaism and Hellenism.*

As conceived by himself, Philo's task was nothing less than the putting of the crown upon the effort already in progress to bring about a reconciliation of Greek culture with the traditional Jewish faith. The attractiveness of such a combination was great, but how was the desired union to be effected? Must not a revelation that was divine be altogether independent of human philosophy? Must it not remain the norm by which the accuracy or error of the conclusions arrived at by human philosophy must be judged? The Jewish Hellenists tried to get over this difficulty by declaring that the Greek philosophers had borrowed their teaching from the Old Testament and drawn their wisdom from the Hebrew lawgiver himself. This conceit they bolstered up with the story contained in the spurious *Letter of Aristeas*, which alleged that the inspiration of the Hebrew text had been reproduced verbally in the Greek translation of the Septuagint, and by arbitrarily asserting that the latter was based upon an earlier translation of the Law. In this way it became possible, with the help of allegorism, to force the sacred text to yield whatever meaning was desired, and to regard Plato as virtually "an Attic

Moses." As Wernle has said, "Allegory becomes the connecting link between the Jewish word and the Greek spirit." <sup>1</sup>

For this movement the way was already paved by the *Letter of Aristeas*, which was clearly intended not only to commend the Jewish religion to the heathen, but also to serve as an eirenicon, theologically, between Jew and Greek. To some extent at least the influence of Hellenism is reflected also in the *Septuagint*. Especially is this the case in connexion with frequent modifications of the Hebrew text in the direction of eliminating anthropomorphic expressions concerning God and His relation to the world, with a view to preserving intact the philosophical conception of the transcendence of the Deity. There is a manifest tendency to allow nothing to be said of God that would in the slightest degree associate Him with human "imperfection or human limitation." <sup>2</sup> The same thing is true of the work of Aristobulus, a Jewish philosopher of the second century B.C., who wrote a philosophical commentary on the Pentateuch, some fragments of which have been preserved in quotations by Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius. <sup>3</sup> From these it is clear that his aim was to point out resemblances between Greek philosophy and Judaism, to urge in explanation of this the dependence of the former upon the latter, and in particular to tone down all anthropomorphic language concerning God. Another notable product of the Jewish-Alexandrian

<sup>1</sup> *Beginnings of Christianity*, i. p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> For details see the present writer's *Background of the Gospels*,<sup>3</sup> p. 414 ff.

<sup>3</sup> There is no reason to doubt their genuineness (against Drummond).

philosophy, and representing it in a still more highly developed form, is the *Book of Wisdom*, which probably dates from about the middle of the first century B.C. Distinctly Hellenistic in thought and expression, in its allegorizing interpretation of Scriptural incidents, in its adoption of various articles of Greek philosophy, and especially in its unification of intermediaries between God and the world under the single name of Wisdom, it virtually transmutes Judaism into a new philosophy having for its object the separation of God from the material universe. With all this, however, the writer by no means abandons the Jewish faith; he merely endeavours to fortify his creed by furnishing it with a philosophical basis.

It was reserved for Philo to give the finishing touch to the work of these and all other predecessors in the field of Jewish-Alexandrian philosophy. No one did so much as he for the fusion of Judaism and Hellenism; to enable the Jew and the Greek to understand each other became the ruling aim of his life. That his equipment for this task was of the best is evidenced by his relation to Greek culture on the one hand, and to Judaism on the other. No feature in Philo's outlook upon life is more marked than his attitude towards the Egyptians and the Greeks respectively. Egypt itself he admires, but its inhabitants he describes as "a wicked race, whose soul has been penetrated by the venom of serpents and crocodiles."<sup>1</sup> The Alexandrians in particular he censures for their "criminal effrontery" in robbing the Jews.<sup>1</sup> While also blaming the Greeks for devoting their fine talents to the composition of comedies and

<sup>1</sup> *Leg. ad Caium*, 25.



fables instead of taking for their theme the lives of illustrious men, he is filled with an ardent love of Greece and of Greek culture. He displays an intimate acquaintance with Greek philosophy and literature, and moulds his style after the pattern of the Greek classical writers, and of Plato in particular.<sup>1</sup> An avowed admirer of Homer and the great tragedians, of Socrates and Plato, he is also an appreciative student of Aristotle—the general principles of whose philosophy, however, he could not accept—and is well versed in the philosophy of the Stoics, Epicureans, and later Pythagoreans. His mental hospitality is unbounded. Of none can it more truly be said that he drank from all the wells of knowledge.

*Basis of Philo's Teaching essentially Hebraic.*

Yet Philo was essentially a Jew, and considered the Greek poets and philosophers as but “broken lights” of Moses, reflecting the truths already implicitly contained in the Old Testament. The statement that Moses was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” is interpreted as meaning that he “at an early age attained

<sup>1</sup> As special peculiarities of Philo's style Siegfried reckons a fondness for the use of (1) synonymous expressions, (2) antitheses, (3) plays upon words. Ewald describes it as “excessively rhetorical, redundantly descriptive, handling its subjects rather with elaborate art than simply, more suited for philosophically schooled than ordinary people, but always dignified and uniform, generally not difficult to read, except when he indulges too much in allegory, at times rising to purer heights and captivating his readers by the force of profoundly felt truths” (*Hist. of Isr.* vii. p. 201, Eng. trans.).

the very summits of philosophy " (*De Opif. Mund.* 8 f.). Certainly in Philo's view Moses was the supreme philosopher, as well as lawgiver, of the world. While his teaching is saturated with Platonic, Stoic, and Neopythagorean influences, its basis remains essentially Hebraic.<sup>1</sup> As a loyal Jew Philo venerated Holy Scripture "as if it were God"; but his knowledge of Hebrew seems to have been slight, and this radical defect rendered unsatisfactory his whole treatment of the Old Testament. Although not intimately conversant with the Palestinian Halacha or traditional law, he was an adept in applying to Scripture the Haggadic exegesis practised by the scribes of Palestine. All his ideas are bound up with the sacred text, which he paraphrases line by line and expounds word by word. For him the Old Testament, and especially the Mosaic law, is the supreme authority. Every word, every letter is holy and absolutely divine. Not only the Hebrew text, but also the Septuagint translation, is verbally inspired. In his view, moreover, the Bible contains the sum of all knowledge and wisdom, and is the source of the truths taught by the Greek philosophers. As a matter of fact, he borrowed many of his doctrines from the Greeks, yet by contriving to deduce them from Scripture he represents the Greeks as having borrowed them from Moses, who is thus exalted as the teacher of the world. In his effort to combine Greek philosophy with Jewish theology he does not place himself midway between the two, but firmly plants himself at the centre of Judaism, and from this vantage-ground labours to incorporate into his work the ideas of the philosophers of Greece. As a

<sup>1</sup> See Note 9, p. 386.

Hellenistic Jew, at once faithful to the religion of his fathers and devoted to Greek philosophy, Philo was singularly fitted to execute the task which he conceived to be marked out for him—that of turning Greeks into Jews and Jews into Greeks.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE EXEGETICAL METHOD OF PHILO

#### *Allegorical Treatment of the Old Testament.*

It has been said that while the Greek loves light the Jew prefers colour. Among the Greeks, ideas found expression in clear-cut, abstract propositions; the Jews, on the other hand, were content to enshrine them under an image. Owing to this essential difference of mentality, it was not easy either for the Greek to attach a precise meaning to this or that passage of Scripture, or for the Jew to wrestle with a philosophy expressed only in concepts. To unite in one "body of divinity" two such diverse tendencies and forms of thought required nothing short of the marvellous instrument employed by Philo—that of allegory.<sup>1</sup>

It is as an exegete of the Old Testament that Philo develops his philosophical thoughts. His theory that Moses and the prophets taught figuratively not only renders him oblivious to the fact that he is introducing foreign matter into the text of Scripture, but also leads him to consider the allegorical interpretation as alone correct. Philo's proposition is that all truth is contained in the Old Testament, but that in order to make

<sup>1</sup> Although allegorism had been practised by his predecessors, it assumed in Philo's hands a new importance.

this manifest it must be interpreted with the aid of allegory. In studying the Scriptures heed should be paid, he contends, not to words and terms, but to the spirit. Even this accommodating general principle, which forms the basis of his exegesis, does not suffice for him; he supplements it with the assertion that "often the same terms are applicable to different ideas; and conversely, different terms may be applicable to the same idea"—an assertion by means of which he naïvely contracts himself out of any obligation to be uniform in his practice. These things taken for granted, the rest is only a matter of ingenuity. In point of fact, Philo accepts the literal text in so far as it does not clash with his own theories, and sets himself to explain it away in so far as it does. Clearly, under such conditions, the verbal inspiration on which he so strongly insists is rendered null and void, even were it not already discounted by the freedom with which he treats the text of the Septuagint, and by his open recognition of the mythical element in Genesis.<sup>1</sup> His own practice is inconsistent with his theory.

By laying down an elaborate system of rules,<sup>2</sup> the observance of which made it possible accurately to

<sup>1</sup> Although it is customary with Philo to lay stress on verbal minutiae, he is very free in his handling of the inspired LXX text. He alters, inserts, or omits words at will. His quotations are so loose as to suggest that they are merely paraphrases, or that they are made from memory. Sometimes they are inextricably interwoven with his own interpretation (for instances, see Kennedy, *op. cit.* p. 38 f.). In speaking of the creation of woman from the rib of a man, he pronounces the literal narrative to be mythical.

<sup>2</sup> For a careful and laborious statement of the rules of allegory, deduced from the evidence furnished by Philo's writings (although probably much more rigid and complete than Philo could have devised for himself!), see Siegfried, *Philo von Alexandrien*, p. 168 ff.

extract from the letter of the biblical text the profounder ideas concealed beneath it,<sup>1</sup> Philo reduced the use of allegory to a kind of science. Amid the bewildering multiplicity of details three main rules emerge. The literal sense must be excluded (1) wherever the biblical text represents God in a character unsuited to His Deity. Thus, for example, what is said of Adam hiding himself from God, or of God questioning Adam, or planting trees in a garden, or coming down to inspect the Tower of Babel, cannot be understood literally, in view of the omnipresence, omniscience, and spirituality of the Divine Being. (2) Wherever the text is unintelligible, or involves a contradiction, or is unworthy of Scripture. Instances of absurdity are the sevenfold punishment destined for Cain, the ban against cavalry (Dt. 17<sup>16</sup>), which is so useful in war, and the statement that Cain built a city when there could have been no more than three families in the world. Examples of passages containing contradictions are Gen. 11<sup>6</sup>, where it is stated that men began to do what they are said in verse 5 to have already done; Gen. 22<sup>34</sup>, which speaks of Abraham coming to the place in the land of Moriah as directed by God, and nevertheless seeing it afar off; and Gen. 28<sup>13</sup>, where Abraham is called Jacob's father, although he was really his grandfather. In illustration of the impossibility of attaching a literal sense to many passages, as unworthy of Scripture, Philo specifies the creation of the world in six days, the creation of woman out of

<sup>1</sup> Philo did not, like Origen, go the length of denying altogether the literal sense of many passages, but it was mainly owing to the glamour of his writings that allegorism—although a misleading *ignis fatuus*—fascinated most Christian teachers in the early centuries of the Church's history.

Adam's rib, and the law declaring the camel unclean because it chews the cud and does not divide the hoof (Lev. 11<sup>4</sup>). (3) Wherever Scripture itself absolutely requires the allegorical interpretation, as when it refers to trees of knowledge and of life, or to speaking serpents. Since these things do not in fact exist, we are shut up (it is argued) to understand them allegorically.

Philo's method is to start from a scriptural text ; but instead of attempting to extract the essential truth underlying it, he fastens upon certain words, and in particular upon proper names, which are then used to mark the divisions of his work. " The name given, he interprets it—that is to say, he seeks for a Greek equivalent to the sense which this word may have in Hebrew. The name interpreted, he draws from it an allegory, and the need of following this allegory to its last limits becomes the unique rule of his development, the sole law of his plan, the reason of his repetitions or of his digressions." <sup>1</sup> It may be added that he shares the Pythagorean liking for numbers, and seldom misses an opportunity of descanting at length on the significance of a six or a seven.

A good illustration of Philo's method is afforded by his treatment of the four rivers of Paradise. According to him, these represent the four Greek cardinal virtues : understanding, courage, soberness, and righteousness. Each has its specific territory : understanding regulates trade ; courage, produce ; soberness, choice ; righteousness, distribution. To a minute

<sup>1</sup> Herriot, *Philon le Juif*, p. 193. It is interesting to recognize in this authority on Philo—his treatise was " crowned " by the French Academy—the present Prime Minister of France.



description of the three first virtues is added a lengthy psychological excursus by way of establishing their order of sequence. Much after the Platonic model, the soul is described as tripartite, consisting of reason, which dwells in the head ; courage, which has its seat in the breast ; and desire, which lodges in the gastric region. The novel thing is to find these speculations utilized in an exposition of the Old Testament intended for the edification of Jews. Righteousness, the fourth virtue, is present wherever the three faculties of the soul are properly regulated, so that understanding is master of courage and soberness. The name of the river, which according to Philo signifies understanding, indicates that true understanding shows itself not in words but in virtuous deeds. The gold of the land round which this river flows represents the value of understanding, which is of two kinds, general and special, the one identified with God, and good because imperishable, the other identified with man, and not good because perishing with him. The stones found in this river, and even the colour of them, are likewise allegorically treated and forced to yield an ethical meaning. Philo's ingenuity further discovers a moral significance in the fact that while the two first rivers "compass" their lands, the third river "goeth toward" the east of Assyria, and of the fourth nothing at all of this sort is predicated. "In point of fact the Euphrates also 'compasseth' many lands, and 'goeth towards' many ; but here the subject-matter is not a river, but character-building." Understanding absolutely excludes unreason, and courage cowardice. Soberness, however, cannot wholly overcome desire, for men must always desire to

eat and drink. Righteousness must know no adversary, but render to every one his due.

Obviously Philo proceeds throughout upon the principle that what is to him of most importance must also have been so regarded by the sacred writer. His main interest, as it happens, is in psychology and ethics, and consequently his commentaries are filled with discussions on points relating to the soul and morality. Quite justly it has been remarked that we can equally well conceive of another man who had a special interest in mathematics or astronomy filling an allegorical commentary on Genesis with dissertations connected with these two branches of human knowledge,<sup>1</sup> although the homiletic requirements of the synagogue probably explain to some extent the development of the kind of writing peculiarly congenial to Philo. It was in demand, so to speak.

One further feature belonging to Philo's theory of allegory may be noted: it is distinctly esoteric. This might be inferred from the fact that in addressing his readers he sometimes uses the very language of the Mysteries, e.g. *Leg. All.* iii. 209: "Open your ears, O ye initiates, and receive the mystic ritual," even had we not his own express avowal on the subject. Commenting on the sacrifice of Isaac, he says: "The story as a matter of fact does not rest upon the literal and obvious version, so that to the average reader its nature seems rather obscure, but those who have an understanding for the invisible things of the mind rather than for the perceptions of the senses, and who possess the power of vision, recognize it" (*De Abr.* 200).

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann in Stade, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, ii. p. 530.

Philo's method, it will be seen, defies the rules of criticism, and opens the way to the most arbitrary interpretations; and while it cannot be denied that the Philonic exegesis sometimes yields interesting and edifying results, it must also be said that it oftener leads to the grossest caricature of Bible teaching. Thus, for example, when, treating of the creation of the world in six days, Philo asserts that the word "day" is not to be understood as referring to a division of time, but that the idea intended to be conveyed is that God completed His work on the basis of the perfect number,<sup>1</sup> his explanation is at least as satisfactory as those modern theories which represent the six days as meaning geological periods or as corresponding to the days of the week; but, on the other hand, when he asks us to think of Tamar as representing the soul widowed from sensual delights, we recoil from such trifling with the text of Scripture, while at the same time recognizing the desperate shifts to which he is driven by his Jewish theory of inspiration. In this way the Scriptures are ruthlessly robbed of their historical significance, and made the scaffolding for the erection of a philosophical system in many respects alien to their real meaning. But although as a theory of biblical interpretation Philo's allegorism was utterly unsound, it was far from his intention deliberately to falsify the plain sense of Scripture. Rather are we to see in his writings a perfectly honest attempt to represent the Jewish Bible as the true source of the Alexandrian philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> "The Mosaic expression was used to denote the orderly arrangement of creation, for number is a property of arrangement, and of numbers six is the most perfect and productive."—Drummond, *Philo Judæus*, i. p. 19, with reference to *Leg. Alleg.* i. 88.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE DOCTRINAL TEACHING OF PHILO.

RIGHTLY to apprehend this, it is necessary to bear in mind that Philo was not only an Old Testament exegete, but also a Greek philosopher, and that his philosophy is conveyed in no clear-cut, coherent system, but in the form of biblical exposition. Although formally based upon Judaism as the depository of religious truth, it is nevertheless, except for its decisive repudiation of polytheism and image-worship, distinctly Greek. It thus assumes the form of an artistic combination of Greek philosophy and Old Testament revelation, and lacks strict logical cohesion. A brilliant attempt is made to co-ordinate apparently unrelated ideas by means of such expedients as the mystic use of significant numbers and the subtle application of the distinction of sex, but the result is singularly unreal. Conceptions drawn from two widely differing sources are often crudely arranged alongside of each other without being fused into harmony. This is notably the case as regards his doctrine of God, in which the abstractions of Greek philosophy are mingled with the positive truths of revealed religion.

#### *Doctrine of God and the World.*

There is only one God. He is simple, and not made up of parts ; free, and not bound ; eternal, unchangeable,

and self-sufficient. Unrelated to time or space, He transcends the world and all finite existence. He is pure Being, and no quality can be ascribed to Him. We know that He is, but not *what* He is. This is a clear deviation from the teaching of the Old Testament. In thus denying all attributes to God, Philo has in view, however, merely to represent Him as devoid of all limitation and imperfection. As a religious thinker it was impossible for him to rest content with palpable agnosticism, and so we find him, in spite of the contradiction thus involved, making definite pronouncements concerning the nature of God based upon His relation to the world. He lays down the general principle that while God's essence indeed transcends our knowledge, we can arrive at a knowledge of His existence and of His providence. This is best attained through ecstasy—a method open, however, only to the initiated, such as Abraham and Moses. For the vast majority the only means of reaching a theory of God is through the inductive method, which enables us to *infer* the divine attributes from the investigation of those of the creature. The world of sense is the effect of an invisible cause, which is God, and the very imperfections of the world illustrate by contrast the perfections of the Deity. He is the sum of all perfection, filling all and containing all in His Being. He is the cause of all, the reason of all, and the sole source of all perfection in the creature. This Stoic conception of God as the all-pervading Force is supplemented by the Platonic conception of Him as goodness and grace. Better than the good, He extends a wealth of beneficence to men. God is good, and all good in the world, moral as well as physical, proceeds from Him.

Nothing but good comes directly from Him, and goodness means perfection in love. Philo is thus at one with Plato and the Old Testament prophets in representing that with God grace takes precedence even of righteousness. In Philo's thought the conception of the Spirit of God occupies quite a subordinate position, due in all probability to the fact that it is blended with and swallowed up by that of the Logos.

For Philo, the tacit basis of whose philosophy is the dualism of God and the world, creation means only the formation of the world out of previously existing shapeless matter. Matter is viewed not as having its origin in God, but as a second principle alongside of God, with which, as finite and imperfect, He can have no direct relations.<sup>1</sup> The action of the Deity upon the material world is only mediate; the world has been formed, and is sustained, by means of the divine Ideas or Powers. This distinctive doctrine of intermediary beings is based principally upon the Stoic doctrine of Forces, but Philo also finds support for it in the Platonic theory of Ideas, the Greek conception of Dæmons, and the Jewish doctrine of Angels. Prominent among these multitudinous powers are the creative, governing, legislative, and foreseeing powers, and also wisdom; but the two supreme powers are goodness and might. In this connexion it has to be remarked that Philo contradicts himself by representing these mediating forces sometimes as distinct personalities, and sometimes as essential parts of the divine existence. His dilemma, of course,

<sup>1</sup> Kennedy quotes some passages in which Philo seems to regard Matter as the creation of God; disputes the view taken by Siegfried and others that for Philo Matter is essentially evil; and attributes to him only a modified Dualism (*op. cit.* p. 68 ff.).



is that whereas, as the media through which God acts upon the world, they are necessarily bound up with Him, they must at the same time, on the theory that God can have no contact with the material cosmos, be ranked as separate existences.

### *The Logos of Philo.*

All the powers, whatever their particular character, proceed from, are reconciled by, and are merged in the Logos—the corner-stone of Philo's system. By combining the Jewish conceptions of the Wisdom and creative Word of God, the Platonic doctrine of Ideas, and the Stoic thought of the divine reason actively operating in the world, Philo was the first to posit, under the already known and conveniently elastic name of the Logos, a mediatorial hypostasis between God and the world. Although containing a certain pantheistic element, his doctrine differs from that of Stoic pantheism and materialism by its clear distinction of the Logos from the Deity on the one hand, and from organized matter on the other. According to Philo, He is identical with neither, but intermediate between the two. Viewed in His relation to God He is Wisdom, and is the expressed thought of the divine mind. (He is the image, shadow, interpreter, word, name, prophet, man, oldest angel, and firstborn Son of God—in fact, “the second God.” To the cosmos He is related as architect, instrument, and pilot, so that if in one sense the Logos underlines the distinction between God and the world, in another He is the bond of union between them. The same thing



holds good with respect to the specially significant relation of the Logos to man. Partaker alike of the divine and human natures, He mediates between God and man, not only acting as God's messenger and interpreter, but also as High Priest removing men's sins in virtue of His purity and obtaining for them the divine clemency through His intercession. He stands, moreover, in a special mystical relation to the individual soul that is not dead in sin. To every such one He is the sun, radiating the light of divine revelation. Where He dwells in the soul He is also the manna supporting the spiritual life, giving power to overcome the world of sense, and enabling the soul to wing its way to its true home in the invisible city of God.

Enough has been said to show that the Logos of Philo—as an amalgam of the Logos of the Greek philosophers, the Alexandrian σοφία, and the ideas bound up with the Angel of the Lord, the Wisdom of the Old Testament, as well as, it may be added, the Memra of Palestinian Judaism—is a mixture of very different elements. This explains why his doctrine of the Logos scarcely admits of being systematically formulated as a whole, and also accounts for its extraordinary influence upon later doctrinal systems. The mysterious interaction of diverse elements which it exhibits, its Protean variety, and its elusive ambiguity lent to it so many different aspects that it appealed in some way to every serious thinker, and helped to mould the entire Christian theology of the early centuries.<sup>1</sup> Critically regarded, Philo's doctrine of the Logos is unsatisfactory. It is

<sup>1</sup> For the manner in which Philo sought to found his Logos doctrine upon Scripture, see Siegfried, *op. cit.* p. 223 ff.

not consistent with itself : sometimes he represents the Logos as a distinct person, and at other times as merely an impersonal principle or property of God at work in the world. This twofold aspect of the conception is, however, the necessary consequence of its double origin. As a Jewish theologian Philo found in the Logos the personal mediator of divine revelation ; as a Greek philosopher he viewed the Logos as the creative and determining reason operating in the cosmos, and as the divine principle of virtue in the human soul.

### *Philo's Doctrine of Man.*

In his doctrine of man Philo adheres to the Platonic dualism. Of the spirits which in his view emanate from God and fill the entire atmosphere, the angels or dæmons occupy the higher parts, while those that are nearest to the earth descend into perishable bodies and so assume the form of men. Man is thus a compound of two elements—soul (ψυχή) and body (σῶμα). The visible body, consisting of earthly substance, is mortal ; the invisible soul, communicated by the divine breath, is immortal. “ Each of us is numerically two, an animal and a man : to each of these has been assigned its proper spiritual potency, to the one that vital principle (ἡ ζωτικὴ) by which we live, to the other the rational (ἡ λογικὴ) in virtue of which we are rational ” (*Quod det. pot.* 82 f.). The body is animated by the soul, of which the higher aspect is mind (νοῦς) or spirit (πνεῦμα), and the lower that vital principle which man has in common with other animals, and of which the

essence is blood. Although thus one of the divine powers, the human soul is necessarily an imperfect image of the Logos on account of its association with matter. As the peculiar seat of evil and the inevitable cause of sin, the body is the prison of the soul, which yearns to break the bonds of sense and ascend once more to God. The exhortation, "Away, my friend, from that earthly vesture of yours, escape from that accursed prison, the body, and from its pleasures and lusts, which are your jailers" (*De Migr. Abr.* 9), "gives a clue to Philo's standpoint. It is not the body which is inherently bad. But the life of the senses, which finds its material, so to speak, in the physical organization, is irrational, and nothing but its subordination to the Divine element of reason can preserve the soul from going astray." <sup>1</sup>

### *Philo's Ethic.*

It follows that the main ethical aim of the human spirit is redemption from the body and the thralldom of sense. This can be attained through the extinction of desire and the conquest of the passions. Philo's ethic in general is that of the Stoics, and even on particular points, such as the doctrine of the four cardinal virtues, he reproduces their teaching. For him as for them morality is the only good. In one important respect, however, he deviates from the teaching of the Stoics. According to the philosophers man must by his own strength escape from the toils of sense; according to Philo this cannot be achieved apart from the help of

<sup>1</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.* p. 89.

God. None can redeem himself by his own power ; it is God who through the instrumentality of the intermediary powers plants and fosters the virtues in the soul of man. Men may live after the flesh or after the spirit, may be godless or righteous, foolish or wise. The contest is between spirit and matter, the two discordant elements in human nature. Only by surrender to divine influence can man reach his true goal, namely,

*The Direct or Mystic Vision of God.*

Even in this life, according to Philo, it is possible for a virtuous soul in moments of rapturous enthusiasm so to rise above himself as to lose his own consciousness in the ecstatic contemplation of Deity. Such a man, in such moments, is as a stringed instrument vibrating to the touch of the Spirit of God. Thus to attain to the vision of Deity is to gain the summit of earthly bliss. There is no excelsior until the soul, liberated from the body, regains its original state—a reward conferred at death only upon those who have freed themselves from sense and so made themselves meet for a blessed immortality. It is interesting to compare with this some lines of the poet Keats :

Wherein lies happiness ? In that which becks  
Our ready minds to fellowship divine,  
A fellowship with essence, till we shine,  
Full alchemized, and free of space. Behold  
The clear religion of heaven !<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Endymion*, Book I. Something partly analogous to the Philonic ecstasy is "a very curious and somewhat rare experience" recorded in *The Adventure of Living* : a subjective autobiography by John St. Loe Strachey, editor of *The Spectator* (p. 77 ff.). "The condition to which I refer is that which the musician Berlioz called *isolement*—the sense of spiritual isolation, which seizes on those who experience it with a

Since with Philo it is an axiom that mortal and immortal cannot fitly dwell together, he naturally teaches that in the experience of ecstasy reason is quenched in the dazzling light of the divine Spirit and returns again as soon as this light is withdrawn. In taking up this position, however, he discloses at once the limitations of his philosophy and the insufficiency of his religion. So sharply does he oppose the divine to the finite that he is obliged to assert the impossibility of a pious soul reaching union with God otherwise than in a state of unconscious ecstasy. But inasmuch as the absence of thought and will amounts to the annihilation of the spiritual life, this involves the absurd conclusion that its perfection can be attained only through its destruction. The attempt made by Philo to remove the opposition

poignancy amounting to awe." Wordsworth's "Ode to Immortality" affords the *locus classicus* in the way of description :

"Fallings from us, vanishings;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature  
Moving about in worlds not realized."

This experience first came to him when a child of not more than six years of age. "As with Wordsworth, everything seemed to vanish and fall away from me, even my own body. . . . I stood a naked soul in the sight of what I must now call the All, the Only, the Whole, the Everlasting. It was no annihilation, no temporary absorption into the Universal Consciousness, no ingression into the Divine Shadow that the child experienced. Rather it was the amplest exaltation and magnification of Personality which it is possible to conceive. . . . I was outside my bodily self, and far away from the world of matter.

"In addition to this awe and sensitiveness [there was] a sudden realization of the appalling greatness of the issues of living . . . of the ineffable greatness of that whole of which I was a part. . . . This feeling had nothing to do with the sense of isolation. It was an entirely separate experience. . . . I had not the least desire to translate my vision of the universal into the terms of theology. . . . My later manifestations of *isolement* were similar to my first, though not so vivid." The last of these occurred at "the age of forty or forty-five."

between God and man by means of the mediating Logos is futile, for "he was unable to grasp the thought ~~that~~ the divine Spirit finds its true revelation and embodiment in the actual spiritual life of man. . . . Therefore the Johannine doctrine, 'The Word became flesh,' forms the point of departure between philosophical speculation, for which the Logos always remained only an abstract spiritual essence, existing furth of (*jenseits*) all human activity, and Christian theology, which believes in the real revelation and continuing presence of the divine Logos or Spirit in the moral-religious life of the Son of God and of all God's children." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pfeiderer, *Die Vorbereitung des Christentums in der Griechischen Philosophie*, p. 51.

## CHAPTER V.

### INFLUENCE OF PHILO ON PAGAN PHILOSOPHY, LATER JUDAISM, AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

THE widespread influence of Philo's teaching is beyond question. Apart from isolated points in regard to which it is more or less clearly traceable, it left its mark unmistakably upon the thought and religion of the early centuries of our era. Owing to its peculiar fusion of biblical and speculative ideas, it acted as a ferment in the intellectual and spiritual life of the age. Like the Nile at the Delta—to use another image—it diffused itself in many streams, affecting cultured paganism, Judaism, and Christianity alike.

#### *Philo's Influence on Later Greek Philosophy.*

The Philonic conception of God as in His essence unknown to men, and detached from the material world, is reflected in the *Opera Moralia* of an independent thinker like Plutarch. In this writer's treatise on *Isis and Osiris*, which deals with Egyptian symbolism,<sup>1</sup> we

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch's object here is (1) to explain on rational principles the significance of Isiac and Osirian ceremonies and legends, and (2) to show that these principles may be applied to religious myths in general without doing violence either to Reason or Piety. See Oakesmith, *The Religion of Plutarch*, p. 65.



find also distinct traces of Philo's doctrine of the Logos. This is the mediating God through whom things earthly are related to the supreme God Osiris. Both writers regard matter as the source of evil. Plutarch's description of dæmons as souls clothed with air likewise suggests a probable borrowing from Philo. The same is true of his insistence on the necessity for the human soul being purified and freed as far as possible from the body in order to its acquiring that enthusiasm without which it cannot fully experience the divine working.

It is not, however, only individual thinkers in whom Philo's influence can be detected; it is reflected also in various schools of philosophy. Neopythagoreanism exhibits unmistakable resemblances to Philonic thought. Apollonius of Tyana (†A.D. 96), who may be reckoned in some sort a representative of this school, is at one with Philo in laying stress upon the ecstatic vision of God as outweighing in importance the whole circle of the sciences, and upon asceticism and prayer as the means of attaining it. Another feature common to both is the combination of patriotic fervour with the pursuit of wisdom wherever found.

Still more striking is the affinity between the speculative theories of Philo and Neoplatonism as set forth in the system of its principal representative Plotinus (c. A.D. 205-270). For a century and a half after Philo's death the Jewish-Alexandrians pursued the path which he had so brilliantly marked out for them. Ignoring the literal sense of Scripture, and viewing the ceremonial law as mere symbolism, they went on publishing their speculative theories. These were for the most part of a Platonic cast. Some, however, like Apollonius of

Tyana, took Pythagoras for their master; while others, like the Therapeutæ, looked to asceticism for "illumination." About the end of the second century there was a new development, the school of the Neoplatonists having been founded by Ammonius Saccas (c. 175-245). A decided tendency showed itself to turn from the strict conclusions of reason to the mystical contemplation of divine ideas. While the Stoic ideal of asceticism was retained, the more spiritual side of humanity asserted itself in opposition to the casuistry and scepticism of the later Stoics; there was a quickening of the religious instinct; men set the ultra-rational before them as the highest object, desiring to reach absolute truth as the basis of conduct and the source of happiness. Neoplatonism was the outcome of, and the culminating point in, the philosophical spirit of the age.<sup>1</sup> Although bearing Plato's name, the Neoplatonic philosophy really brought philosophical science under a new systematic form. Its fundamental principle was the transcendence of the Deity, and its ultimate aim the direct apprehension of the divine essence. In its general aspects Neoplatonism is a syncretistic compound of the Oriental doctrine of emanation and the Platonic doctrine of ideas, with elements from every other important system save Epicureanism, the whole being cast in a Hellenic

<sup>1</sup> It formed the last of the three great branches of Greek philosophy during the period when theosophy was in the ascendant, and so falls to be distinguished on the one hand from Neopythagoreanism, which prepared the way for it, and on the other from the system of Philo, which was a mixture of Old Testament revelation and Hellenic philosophy. It differed also from Gnosticism, which wore the colours of Christianity. All these systems, however, are equally the product of the philosophic temper, and were founded on the widespread belief in a dualistic opposition between God and matter.

mould. According to the *Enneads* of Plotinus, who was the first to develop the system in detail, the supreme Essence and primitive Source of all things is the unconditioned One, or the Good. By a process of emanation—which is not a logical act, as in Hegelianism, but a physical necessity—everything comes forth from it, like rays from the sun. The great product, and at the same time the image, of the One is the *Nous*. It contains the world of ideas, in the sense of being composed of them. Thus the ideas in the aggregate form the *Nous*, which, next to the One, has the highest perfection. As the One produces the *Nous*, so too the *Nous* produces the world-soul, which is also the image of the *Nous*, as the *Nous* is of the One. The further an emanation is from the One, the lower its rank. So, by a series of emanations gradually descending from the One, we reach the world of sense, which is the lowest stage of emanation. According to this system it is man's vocation to purify his soul from the degradation of the sensuous by thought, abstinence, and virtue, so as to be able in the first place to live in the world of ideas, and then, by reducing himself to a state of entire passivity and unconsciousness of time or space, to attain to the ultimate end of his being, namely, ecstatic union with God.<sup>1</sup> Here we find obvious indications of the influence of Philo. In representing God as elevated above human thought, and matter as essentially evil; in seeking to

<sup>1</sup> His pupil Porphyry says that Plotinus reached this direct vision of the One four times within six years. So ashamed, indeed, was this philosopher of having a body at all, that he refused to have his portrait taken, holding that the fact of his soul being veiled by an earthly image was in itself sufficiently humiliating, without the added shame of handing down to posterity an image of that image.

bridge the gulf between God and matter by means of intermediary divine powers or ideas collectively present in the Logos (? = Nous) ; in conceiving the actual world as an image of a higher spiritual world, and the human soul as the spiritual inhabitant of an alien corporeal environment ; in his belief in Providence and in the freedom of the will ; in pronouncing man's chief ethical task to be not the virtuous ordering of daily life, but the severance of the bond between soul and body, by purification of the spirit through renunciation of everything material and sensual, and exaltation to the supersensible world ; and in declaring that the rational soul, elevated above conscious thought, can assert its superiority and reach its highest end in the direct vision of God ;—in all this Plotinus is in substantial agreement with Philo. They are also at one as regards their belief in Providence and in the freedom of the will.

### *Influence of Philo on Later Judaism.*

Philo's influence upon later Judaism is seen already in the case of Josephus (A.D. 37–c. 100), who not only records the part played by Philo in the embassy to Rome, but also speaks of him as “a man highly distinguished, and not unskilled in philosophy.”<sup>1</sup> Two instances of direct dependence may be noted.

(a) In his interpretation of the Law, Josephus allegorizes quite after the manner of Philo, distinguishing between the literal and the allegorical sense. “Our legislator,” he says, “speaks some things wisely but

<sup>1</sup> *Ant.* xviii. 8. 1.

enigmatically, but still explains such things as required a direct explication, plainly and expressly.”<sup>1</sup> According to him the tabernacle and its vessels, as well as the garments of the high priest, have a mystical significance. The tabernacle is a representation of the world. “When Moses divided the tabernacle into three parts,<sup>2</sup> and allowed two of them to the priests, he denoted the land and the sea, these being accessible to all; but he set apart the third division for God, because heaven is inaccessible to men.”<sup>3</sup> Thus also the twelve loaves denoted the twelve months of the year; the lamps upon the candlesticks, the seven planets; the four materials of the curtains, the four elements; the fine linen, the earth, out of which the flax springs; the purple, the sea; the blue, the air; and the scarlet, fire. The high priest’s linen vestment symbolizes the earth; the blue, the sky; the ephod, the nature of the All (τὴν τοῦ παντὸς φύσιν); the gold, the splendour by which all things are enlightened; the breastplate is placed in the centre of the ephod, as the earth in the centre of the world. The girdle is the symbol of the ocean, which girdles the entire world; the sardonyxes on the shoulders betoken the sun and the moon; the twelve precious stones signify the twelve signs of the zodiac, or the twelve months. The mitre means heaven, for it is inscribed with the name of God, and has a crown of gold because of that splendour with which God is pleased.

(b) Josephus is at one with Philo in his explanation of the reason why the Mosaic legislation is prefaced by

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *Ant.*

<sup>2</sup> The entrance or porch was apparently reckoned a distinct third part.

<sup>3</sup> *Ant.* iii. 7. 7.

an account of the creation of the world. Philo characteristically declares that Moses rejected as unphilosophical the usual practice of legislators, who begin by making specific enactments regarding what must be done or left undone, without previously laying down any religious or ethical basis for such enactments. According to him, Moses has placed in the forefront the narrative of the Creation to show that the law is in harmony with the world, and that it is just the law-abiding man who is the true citizen of the world. While likewise asserting the harmony existing between nature and the precepts of the law, Josephus further affirms that in adopting the course he did Moses aimed first at leading the mind to the contemplation of God. It is, he says, impossible for any one either to live properly himself, or to give laws to others, unless he first of all meditate upon the nature of God and base his conduct upon a careful study of God's doings. In his view it is an essential qualification of the legislator that he should recognize God as the omniscient Lord of all, who rewards virtue with happiness and visits vice with misery. For this reason Moses does not at the outset promulgate a legislative code, but begins by teaching religious submission to God, who is the perfection of all virtue. In this way men's hearts are won for Him, and they are ready to conform in all respects to His will because they desire to copy Him. Both writers also point out that Moses does not, like other legislators, mix up and overlay the truth with fables, and so provide wicked men with plausible excuses for their sins.

Philo's influence is also traceable in the later Jewish exegesis. For details in this connexion the student is



referred to the careful treatment of Siegfried in his *Philo von Alexandria* (p. 281 ff.). According to this writer, from whom the following particulars are selected, the Targum of Onkelos exhibits less affinity to Philo than that of the Pseudo-Jonathan or the Jerusalem Targum. In the translation which the last-named gives of Gen. 1<sup>27</sup> the thought conveyed is that man is created not in the likeness of God Himself, but of an image of God, just as with Philo the divine Nous ranks first, then the Logos, and finally the human Nous as a third type. Philosophical myths occur in the Palestinian Midrash as in the writings of Philo, and Philo's twofold conception of the Logos as at once the world-plan and the architect who executes the plan (*De Opif. Mund.* i. 4) is reproduced in *Jalkut*, ch. i., which speaks of the king as building a palace, yet not according to his own idea, but according to that of his architect, who in turn builds according to the prepared plan. It seems clear also that the doctrine of the Metraton, which is developed in the Palestinian Midrash, is influenced by Philo's doctrine of the Logos. In the Jerusalem Talmud, *Hagiga* 15<sup>a</sup>, the Metraton is he who is permitted to sit in the innermost chamber of God, and in *Synhedr.* 38<sup>b</sup> it is inferred from the use of the expression "Come up unto the Lord," instead of "Come unto me," in Ex. 24<sup>1</sup>, that the Metraton bears God's name and resembles Him, wherefore also Elijah is the Metraton, for אֱלֹהִים is God Himself. These conclusions are certainly quite after the manner of Philo. It is further significant that in the Talmud not only are the Greek language and literature referred to in appreciative terms (*Aboda Sara*, 54<sup>b</sup>), but Greek words are frequently employed. The later



rabbinical literature also furnishes undoubted examples of the allegorizing tendency of the period.

Whether, and to what extent, the influence of Philo is reflected in the Jewish Kabbala is a question on which it is impossible to enter here. It is fully discussed by Siegfried, who detects many points of contact between the Philonic writings and the kabbalistic teaching which has moulded so largely the intellectual development of the Jews. On the same authority we are further warranted in holding that through the medium of Neoplatonism later Jewish thinkers like Ibn-Gabirol and Maimonides borrowed extensively from Philo, both in their doctrinal teaching and in their handling of Scripture. At the same time it must frankly be admitted that where Judaism had taken on distinctly the colour of Philo's thought it afterwards showed a growing tendency to get rid of this and to develop on Pharisaic lines. Hellenism, on the other hand, favoured Christianity. Thus if in Philo's system Greek philosophy and Hellenistic Judaism met and to a considerable extent coalesced, a gradual dissolution of the partnership ensued.

### *Philo's Influence on Early Christian Theology.*

The main point for investigation here is the extent to which Philonic thought is reflected in the New Testament. It would clearly be unsafe to infer its presence from the mere fact that in the New Testament writings there are undoubted traces of the forms of Jewish exegesis (both of the Halacha and Haggada) in the

handling of passages from the Old Testament,<sup>1</sup> and also of the allegorical method of the Alexandrians.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, if there are obvious points of affinity between Philo's teaching and Christian doctrine, such as the conception of a Mediator between God and men, and that of mankind as at once sunk in sin and ethically called to become free from sin, there are also essential points of difference. Pagan and philosophical elements entirely foreign to the New Testament enter into Philo's conception of God. In his doctrine of the Logos there is a metaphysical and pantheistic vein which is absent from the New Testament writings. The latter also lend no countenance to the view that evil is exclusively bound up with the material body.

While there are certain verbal and other resemblances between the Synoptic Gospels and the writings of Philo, these scarcely suffice to establish the theory of direct influence. But there is almost certainly, in spite of all differences, an historical connexion between the Johannine doctrine of the Logos and that of Philo. Here we meet with two extreme views, the one that John's doctrine of the Logos is wholly based upon the Old Testament, the other that it was directly borrowed from Philo.<sup>3</sup> Both are equally discredited by reason of their failure to take account of the development of the Logos-idea in the Jewish Wisdom literature of the post-exilic period. Philo's object was to reconcile Greek philosophy with the Old Testament, and the truth appears to be that

<sup>1</sup> (Halachic) Matt. 12<sup>11</sup> (cf. Deut. 22<sup>4</sup>) ; Acts 17<sup>2</sup>, 23<sup>5</sup> (cf. Ex. 22<sup>20</sup>) ; 2 Cor. 11<sup>24</sup> (cf. Deut. 25<sup>3</sup>) ; (Haggadic amplification) Matt. 1<sup>5</sup> ; Luke 4<sup>25</sup> ; Jas. 5<sup>17</sup> ; Rom. 10<sup>6-8</sup> ; 1 Cor. 10<sup>4</sup> ; 2 Tim. 3<sup>8</sup> ; Heb. 12<sup>21</sup> ; Jude 9 ; Rev. 2<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 9<sup>9</sup> ; Gal. 3<sup>10</sup>, 4<sup>24 f.</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Note 10, p. 387.

in the execution of his design he availed himself of the advance made in the apocryphal books, while at the same time carrying it further, with the result that in his writings we have an ambiguous transformation of the Jewish idea of Wisdom into that of the Logos. Naturally enough the Evangelist utilized a term which had received currency as the designation of the principle of revelation in God, and to which Alexandrian speculation had given a wider scope. He may not have taken it directly from Philo ; it is probably more accurate to say that he simply fell in with the usage which Philo's writings had popularized. In short, his use of it is not to be explained without reference to the influence of Philo, who, however, had simply elaborated in his Logos-doctrine an Old Testament conception,<sup>1</sup> which had already undergone considerable development. The essential thing to note is that John employs the term in a new sense to denote the Eternal Son of God who became incarnate in Jesus Christ, and to express what he conceived to be His divine significance.<sup>2</sup> As an exponent of philosophic dualism, Philo would have viewed with repugnance the doctrine that "the Word became flesh." Both writers, however, represent the Logos as reflecting the glory of the Father. Common to

<sup>1</sup> Stevens, *Theol. of the N.T.*, p. 580.

<sup>2</sup> "He borrows the conception of the Logos for a moment, because in the environment for which he wrote it facilitated the execution of his purpose. But though he borrows the conception, he does not borrow from it. He does not invest Jesus with an unreal greatness which belongs to this philosophical conception and not to the Person. Jesus is too great for this, and too real ; the writer knows Him too well, and his devotion to Him is too absolute ; as the gospel itself will show, he can say everything he has to say about Jesus without so much as using the term."—Denney, *Jesus and the Gospel*, p. 91.

both also is the thought that the Logos forms all things after the pattern of the Father, and although Philo has chiefly in view His creative activity, while John transfers the idea to the ethical sphere and applies it to the earthly activity of Christ, Philo also attributes to the same divine Word that created the world the raising of the souls of the good to God, and is thus at one with the Johannine description of those who "were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1<sup>3</sup>). The name Paraclete is used by Philo of the Logos as Mediator between God and men, and in 1 John 2<sup>1</sup> is applied to Christ.<sup>1</sup> Both writers describe the Logos as the manna of the soul, and as dwelling in the souls of the righteous. Philo, however, ascribes to the Logos what in John 16<sup>8 ff.</sup> is ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

There is also an undoubted affinity between the Epistle to the Hebrews and the writings of Philo. It is true that in some respects it is more akin to Palestinian Judaism. The conception of the future sabbath rest (4<sup>9</sup>), for example, is far from being that of Philo, who views it as the union of the world or of the human spirit with the divine Logos. Another point of cleavage appears in connexion with the idea of the heavenly Jerusalem (12<sup>22</sup>, 13<sup>14</sup>), which the Jewish philosopher characteristically interprets as denoting primarily the world, and secondarily the souls of the wise, in which God moves about as in a city.<sup>2</sup> It is, however, the *resemblances* between the Philonic writings and this

<sup>1</sup> It is here assumed that the Epistle and the Fourth Gospel are from the same pen.

<sup>2</sup> Riehm, *Hebräerbrief*, i. p. 253. On the *differences* between this Epistle and Philo, see i. p. 260 ff., and ii. p. 856 of this work.

New Testament epistle which specially concern us here. These are not only of a general character, such as the employment of an allegorizing exegesis,<sup>1</sup> exclusive use of the Septuagint, verbally inexact quotation from the Old Testament,<sup>2</sup> and the contrast drawn between this world of shadows and the heavenly world of realities, but extend also to salient points of doctrinal teaching. Among the instances adduced by Siegfried, with parallel quotations from the Greek, are the following:—Philo speaks of the Logos, and the writer to the Hebrews of Christ, as the first-born Son of God, the medium of creation, the upholder of all things, the great High Priest and Intercessor. Common to both is the idea that while the ceremonial sacrifice can only call sin to remembrance, without effecting forgiveness, the true sacrifice to be aimed at is the sacrifice of praise. Philo's Platonic conception of the visible world as a copy of the invisible is reproduced in Hebrews, where the earthly holy places made with hands are referred to as figures of the true. The obedience of faith as exemplified in Abraham consists for both writers in the fact that at the divine behest he goes into an unknown land. By both authors the faithfulness of Moses is singled out for mention in the same terms: he was "faithful in all his house." They also coincide in respect of the distinction drawn between beginners and those more advanced in knowledge. Both describe the pious as God's habitation, and liken the word of God to bodily food.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Leg. Alleg.* iii. 25 with Heb. 7<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *de Ebriet.* 14. i. 365, εἶπε γὰρ τοῦ τις with Heb. 2<sup>8</sup>, διεμαρτύρατο δὲ τοῦ τις λέγων, and Heb. 13<sup>6</sup>, which is nowhere found in the Old Testament, but is quoted by Philo *de Confus. Ling.* in precisely the same form.

In spite of Harnack's assertion that only from the beginning of the second century did Philo's philosophy of religion become operative among Christian teachers, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that in the Pauline Epistles numerous coincidences of method, thought, and expression point to Philonic influence. Thus in Gal. 3<sup>16</sup>, where the apostle argues from the fact that in Gen. 22<sup>18</sup> the singular and not the plural is used, the allegorical value of number finds recognition. When in 1 Cor. 9<sup>9</sup> in allusion to Deut. 25<sup>4</sup> he asks, "Doth God take care for oxen?" (that is, He means the principle to be extended so as to be applied to men), and thence infers the obligation of the Christian community to maintain their teachers, his hermeneutic is quite parallel to that of Philo, who in reference to Ex. 22<sup>7</sup> says it is impossible to suppose that God can concern Himself so much about a coverlet, and concludes that what is really meant by "raiment" is the protecting Word. The allegorical interpretation of the name Hagar, by which it is made to denote Mt. Sinai (Gal. 4<sup>24f.</sup>), is reached in accordance with Philo's rule that Hebrew words can be translated and made to yield their peculiar significance through the Greek. Doctrinally, the parallelism can be traced in the terms in which both Philo and St. Paul represent the moral depravity of heathenism, the outrage to the divine Majesty implied in the deification of the creature, the inner conflict resulting from the inherence of sin in human nature, and the longing for deliverance from this condition. Both writers sharply distinguish between "our own" righteousness and the righteousness of God, and in attributing to faith the power to detach from everything material and to grasp only the



unseen. In the estimation of both, Abraham ranks as the father of the faithful, and faith itself as a cardinal virtue. Characteristic of both are the call to rise above the letter of the law to inward constraint by the will of God, and the longing to reach conformity to the image of the divine Mediator. Linguistic resemblances are also of frequent occurrence. Philo speaks of ascetics as warriors who assault their own bodies, Paul of beating his body black and blue (1 Cor. 9<sup>27</sup>). By Philo the pious are styled "heirs of divine good things," by Paul, "heirs of God." Both designate God the only Wise, whom no man can see; both use the image of the mirror with reference to the character of human knowledge; both compare the spiritual endeavourer to a runner in a race; both describe the pious man as a stranger on earth, whose real citizenship is in heaven.

In whatever way the author may have come by it, the Epistle of James also seems in several particulars to reflect the Alexandrian influence. The doctrine that God, as pure and changeless Light, is the Giver of good only, and that in no case does evil originate with Him, but in every case from man's own lust, is fully shared by Philo. Other points in regard to which the Jewish Hellenist and the Christian writer occupy common ground are the futility of faith without works; the divine origin of virtue in the soul; the special estimation of wisdom as God's gift in answer to prayer, and its characterization as peaceable; as well as the declaration that he who, though avoiding a breach of one precept, transgresses another, violates the whole law.

Philonic influence is barely traceable in the Apocalypse, although it is possibly present in phrases



like "the beginning of the creation of God" (3<sup>14</sup>) and "the word of God" (Logos) in 19<sup>13</sup>. On the connexion of the latter with the doctrine of Philo, see p. 286.

While Philo's influence can thus be clearly traced in the New Testament, it also continued to have a marked effect, partly beneficial, partly detrimental, upon the subsequent development of Christian theology. The Greek Fathers of the first century, in particular Barnabas; the Greek Apologists of the second century (Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, etc.); the Alexandrians of the second and third centuries (Clement, Origen, etc.); the Gnostics (Cerinthus, Valentinus, Simon Magus, etc.), and their opponents (Irenæus, Tertullian, etc.); the Church historian Eusebius of Cæsarea; and even the leading Greek theologians of later times (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom, etc.) have all, more or less, borrowed from Philo. The same is true, if in a less degree, as regards the Latin Fathers; Jerome, Ambrose, etc., found in the writings of the Jewish Hellenist of Alexandria a rich mine of useful material. But to pursue this matter in detail would carry us beyond the natural limits of this book.

## CHAPTER VI.

### "PHILO'S CONTRIBUTION TO RELIGION."

IN the preceding pages we have not refrained from legitimate criticism of the great Jewish Hellenist of Alexandria. When all is said, however, the fact remains that Philo is an outstanding figure in the annals of religion ; and there is force in the contention of Professor Kennedy that there has been " a lack of proportion " in the treatment given to his work.<sup>1</sup> Whatever may be said of his peculiar standpoint as an eclectic philosopher, or of his incoherent speculations about the nature and moral relations of God, the world, and man ; however palpably puerile may be his method of expatiating on names<sup>2</sup> and numbers and verbal niceties occurring in the text of the Septuagint ; thoroughly unsound as his allegorical method of interpreting Scripture must be pronounced to be,—“these are not the things that count in Philo.” What does count is the moral and spiritual elevation of the man himself. Religious contemplation was the transparent delight of his soul. With a poetic temperament akin to that of the Hebrew prophets, he equalled them also in point of spiritual receptivity, and

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Curiously enough, he himself deprecates “ paltry trifling with names ” (*De Cherub.* 42).

in the warmth of his estimate of genuine piety as contrasted with mere ceremonial obedience to the Law. His single-eyed search for truth ; his splendid ethical ideals, and his devotion to the cause of virtue for its own sake ; his faith in the goodness and graciousness of God ; the beauty and spirituality of his religious conceptions ; the true inwardness of his piety ; his constant care to keep himself unspotted from the world ; his abiding joy in the Lord ; his mystic enthusiasm ; and his eager aspiration after union with God in ecstatic vision ;—these constitute the real and lasting heritage we owe to Philo. Although in our day his writings are perused only by a stray scholar here and there, it is all the more necessary on this account to recognize that the spirit of the man is beyond all praise. " Indeed," says Dr. Kennedy, " the chief impression made upon one by a careful reading and re-reading of his works is the extraordinary vitality of his religious interest, the depth of his religious experience. This seems to be of central value for understanding the man himself, and for estimating his bearing on Christianity." <sup>1</sup>

The service rendered by this writer in drawing attention to the personal religion of the great Jewish Hellenist of Alexandria deserves every acknowledgment. However little we may have been accustomed to think of him as a mystic, " we learn now that for Philo there is an ' impact ' of God upon the soul ; that the soul which is ' linked to God ' possesses eternal life ; that this is not in some future state of reward, but a present possibility which may become actual, and so does sometimes ; that the link is forged by a passion of love

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. viii.

for God ; that the ' vision of God ' is the crown of the soul's achievement ; but that there is an advent of the soul in God which is beyond all joy of vision ; and in fine that there is a state—of all the last and highest—wherein the soul is ' transformed into the Divine type,' becoming akin to God and truly Divine. It follows that Philo is of that blessed company—of all tribes and tongues and peoples—who have borne true testimony, grounded in experience, concerning the great end of being—' life in God and union there.' " <sup>1</sup>

Yet when all due weight is given to this aspect of the subject, it is just as true of Philo as of Plato that his religion is that of the few—that of the philosopher and the ascetic. The ideal held out by him is attainable only by a small minority of select souls. According to him : " There are few whose ears are open to receive these sacred words which teach that it belongs to God alone to sow and to create what is good " (*De Mut. Nom.* 138). In the search after the spiritual vision of the Uncreated and Divine, in the endeavour to acquire goodness and to scale the heights of blessedness, many fail, because God does not reveal Himself to them (*Leg. Alleg.* iii. 47). Only a favoured few reach the goal and win the splendid recompense obtainable by the struggling soul. To quote Dr. Kennedy once more : " This conviction colours both his thought and his language. Again and again when he deals with the ineffable discoveries of the soul in God which he seeks to elucidate allegorically, he speaks as if to an esoteric

<sup>1</sup> Review of Professor Kennedy's work in *The Bookman* (April, 1920).

circle, and employs the terminology of the Mystery-cults of paganism." <sup>1</sup>

It may be quite true, as this learned author contends, that we are to find the source of Philo's doctrine of ecstasy not in the theories or practice of Hellenistic religion, but in the experience of the Old Testament prophets when they were "in the ecstasy." In either case, however, Philo has no gospel for humanity.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 211 f.

PART III.  
HELLENISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY



## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

### *Hellenistic Reaction in Palestine during the First Century B.C. and its Significance for Christianity.*

THE intimate association of Hellenism with paganism has led many to think of its influence on Christian doctrine and practice as a negligible quantity. It is not uncommon to regard the Christian faith as purely the product of Christ's teaching on Palestinian soil, and as wholly unaffected by contact with forces from without. And at first sight there are some considerations which seem to support this view. Did not the Romans, for example, look upon Christians as merely a sect of Jews <sup>1</sup> characterized by all the vices of what Tacitus calls "that vilest of peoples," coupled with some peculiar to themselves? Is it not matter of history that only after a fierce controversy were Gentiles admitted to Christian fellowship? And may not the activities and writings of the Apostle Paul be broadly construed as a counterblast to those subtle Hellenistic influences which held well-nigh the whole world in their grip? Was not he the protagonist of a gospel which was to the Greeks "sheer folly"?

This opinion, however, is untenable in the light of the history of Palestine during the two or three centuries

<sup>1</sup> This is borne out by the statement of Suetonius (*Vit. Claud.*):  
"Judæos, impulsore Chresto, assidue tumultuantes Româ expulit."

immediately preceding the Christian era. That history shows the existence of an active pagan propaganda, which had important results for Judaism, and afterwards for Christianity as well. The position of the Jewish people right between Egypt and Syria exposed them to foreign influence from both sides, and in either case that influence was mainly of a Hellenistic kind. Greek cities were established on the coast-line by the Egyptian, and later along the Jordan valley by the Syrian kings ; and all of these were centres of Greek civilization. A career was open to capable young Greek-speaking Jews at the imperial courts both of the Ptolemies and the Seleucidæ. Conclusive evidence of the extent to which Greek thought, Greek religion, and Greek customs had permeated the country is afforded by the fact that at the commencement of the second century B.C. there had arisen within Judæa itself a vigorous Hellenistic party who favoured the adoption of Greek ideas and practices. With the priestly aristocracy at their head, the educated and upper classes in particular had yielded to the fascination of Hellenism. As they became expert in the Greek language, they became eager to adopt Greek manners and customs. Greek art revealed to them a new world of beauty ; Greek games, entertainments, and spectacular shows brought to them a life of pleasure and freedom hitherto unknown. In their headlong zeal some even apostatized from Judaism ; others tried to retain their old religion along with the new enjoyments of the Hellenistic mode of life. Thus even before the futile attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes to suppress the Jewish religion the Hellenizers were active in Judæa ; and indeed it was in concert with

them, and in reliance upon their aid, that this monarch embarked on what proved to be an impossible enterprise. It soon became evident that Antiochus, misled by the apostates who encouraged him, had overreached himself. The atrocious proposal to destroy Judaism root and branch was too drastic to win assent. It is never easy for a nation to forget its history and turn its back upon its past, and certainly for the Israelitish people this was impossible. Even Hellenizing Jews made common cause with those who were minded to die rather than renounce the covenant of their fathers. Coercion became impracticable. No longer was the sacred soil of Judæa desecrated by heathen rites; the legal sacrifices were offered as aforetime. Yet even thus the Hellenistic spirit was not exorcized from Jewish national life; it was only on its religious side that it was utterly repelled.

A century later, when the Romans became lords of Palestine, a reaction in favour of Hellenism had set in. Even a scion of the Maccabæan house, Aristobulus I. (B.C. 105-104), had earned the surname of Phil-Hellen. The sympathies of Alexander Jannæus (B.C. 104-78) were also distinctly Hellenistic. At the dawn of the Christian era Herod the Great was a keen Hellenizer. Not only were temples built by him for Greeks in many parts of Asia Minor and the Ægean archipelago, but the interests of Greek culture were sedulously promoted by him within his own kingdom also. He surrounded himself with Greek scholars and artists; and as the vassal of the Romans instituted quinquennial festal games of the Greek type in honour of Cæsar. Theatres and amphitheatres were erected by him at Cæsarea and

at Jerusalem. In the Holy City he also rebuilt the Jewish temple on a scale of great magnificence, but in Greek style, and—to the horror of the Jews—with a golden eagle gleaming over the Great Gate. All these Hellenizing measures had the sympathetic support of the Sadducees, whose attenuated creed left no place for angels or spirits or a future life. Official patronage naturally gave the Greek-speaking settlers in Palestine the best possible opportunity of disseminating Hellenistic art and culture. The policy of the Jews, developed in the post-exilic period, had been rigorously to exclude everything foreign; but now they found themselves surrounded with a network of Hellenistic townships whose inhabitants became for them, commercially and otherwise, a connecting link with the great world outside. The Greek influence was thus a very prominent feature in the life of Palestine at the time of our Lord's Advent, and helped to create that width of outlook which was essential to a proper understanding of the world-religion He came to inaugurate. But it did more than help to prepare the way for Christianity; it stamped itself indelibly on the most ancient systematic presentation of Christian doctrine which we possess. To Hellenism in fact is due the existence of a type of Christianity differing in many respects from that which, mainly owing to Augustine, afterwards held sway in the West. Platonism in particular was so strong as to give rise to the famous Alexandrian school, with its far-reaching influences.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE FULNESS OF THE TIME : JOHN THE BAPTIST.

IN all the three great sections of the civilized world men were prepared for Christianity. Greek thought, Hebrew religion, and Roman polity had severally contributed to this result. But if each had achieved something positive in the direction of preparing the world for the perfect religion, it is equally true that each was baffled in the attempt to work out its own salvation. Manifestly the world was sick at heart, and labouring under a sense of defeat. The Greek, foiled in the ardent pursuit of wisdom ; the Jew, groaning under the burden of the ceremonial law ; the Roman, strong but not satisfied—all stood weary and heavy-laden round the Cross. “ For behold, a New Era has come, the future all the brighter that the past was base.” <sup>1</sup>

#### *In the Fulness of the Time.*

Under Augustus, it is true, there took place something like a revival of ancient paganism. It was that Emperor's idea to base his government upon religion, and his reign was signalized by the erection of numerous

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle, *French Revolution*, bk. i. chap. iv.

temples and the restoration of former usages, as well as by the institution of new cults like those of Mars and Apollo. A certain hopefulness began to breathe through the literature of the period. Poets sang of the golden age about to dawn. That age was indeed at hand, but it was to come not through the rehabilitation, but through the destruction of old pagan beliefs. It was to be ushered in by the joyous proclamation of the salvation of which heathen philosophy had only been able to demonstrate the necessity. The later Stoics had adopted the Platonic view that the soul is imprisoned in an evil, because material, body, but the more earnestly they withdrew into self in quest of the good, the more clearly they perceived that evil had seized like a canker upon the soul itself, and that what was needed was the complete renewal of man's inmost nature. How this was to be effected remained a problem insoluble to human reason. Where civilization was highest, depravity was deepest. Deliverance could come only from above. In spite of all efforts to maintain them, old faiths were crumbling to decay, and there was a general yearning for something that would satisfy the soul. It was, too, a time of peace, when men had leisure to listen to what God the Lord would speak. The choice weapon of the Greek tongue had been forged, and was in readiness for effective use by the soldiers of Christ, while the Roman highways were everywhere prepared for the feet of His messengers. Moreover, a watchful Providence had preserved and kept distinct for ages the chosen race. Though Palestine had been the battlefield of dynasties, and though the nation had been once and again removed from the land, the Jews had shown

a marvellous cohesion and stubborn devotion to their nationality. They had felt the influence of the type of civilization prevalent throughout the Mediterranean region ; by means of allegorism the religious content of Judaism had been brought into contact with the Greek spirit ; yet amid the general intermixture of races and religions which characterized the age, and in spite of all foreign influences, they had retained alike their racial identity and their religious faith. Many of them failed to discern the signs of the times, but not a few earnest spirits waited for the consolation of Israel. In short, the fulness of the time had come, and God sent forth His Son. On the banks of the Jordan the last of the prophets, in himself the embodiment of all that was deepest and purest in the national hopes, was pointing out the King-Saviour, the Messiah-Redeemer, in the significant words : " Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand " ; " Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." <sup>1</sup> He announced no temporal Messiah, no worldly kingdom, no redemption except by sacrifice.

*John the Baptist.*

The appearance of John the Baptist inaugurated a new spiritual movement. He has earned the Divine

<sup>1</sup> Agnum monstrat in aperto,  
Vox clamantis in deserto,  
Vox Verbi prænuncia.  
Ardens fide, verbo lucens,  
Et ad veram lucem ducens,  
Multa docet millia.  
Christus vero lux eterna  
Lux illustrans omnia.

ADAM OF ST. VICTOR.



commendation of being "a burning and a shining light." Like a mighty torch that blazes forth suddenly, casting its illumination far and near, sprang up in the wilderness of Judæa this fiery preacher. He had many eager listeners, for if some of the Jewish people were either sunk in materialism or given over to religious formalism, others all aglow with spiritual expectancy "looked for redemption." First of all he sounded a note of warning: "Now is the axe laid at the root of the tree." For two centuries the Jews had been indulging in many flights of fancy with respect to "the last things," and Jewish writers had expatiated upon the ruin to be brought upon the Gentiles by the coming judgement. But John the Baptist turned the searchlight upon the Jews themselves, declaring that the mere fact of their descent from Abraham would count for nothing, and that no tree could stand unless it brought forth good fruit. The second note in John's preaching is that of exhortation: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." His preaching was very plain and direct, and running through it there was a spirit quite the reverse of the Judaistic spirit, which was so much bound up with outward forms. What he required was compunction of soul. This he represented as an indispensable preparation for the kingdom which was at hand, and which was to come in the person of the King who was about to succeed him—that glorious "One" of whom he so often spoke. In His absence there could be no such kingdom; with His presence it was already in existence.

John followed up his preaching by taking action as a practical reformer. He banded together in a society those in whom the reformation he preached had begun

to take shape. Admission to this sacred circle took place through the rite and symbol of baptism. Thus even a man like the Baptist tells us there is a Divine value in symbols; they too do their work. His was essentially the baptism of repentance, the sign of a relinquished past; but it was also a baptism of hope, for it pointed to a still better baptism—that of the Holy Ghost and of fire—as distinctive of the kingdom which was at hand. Upon its glorious manifestation John's ministry would necessarily cease. He baptized only "in the name and in view of a Messiah to come."<sup>1</sup>

With such a character, and such a message, and such a fellowship, this stern, rugged, desert preacher—the first since Malachi to rekindle the prophetic flame—could scarcely fail to send a wave of conviction over the land. While with his lofty morality he thrilled the souls of the good, he sent a tremor into the hearts of the wicked, and led many seriously to canvass the question: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" His ministry had far-reaching results. The country was shaken from end to end; men listened eagerly to his fiery speech, and flocked to his baptism. Jesus Himself came under the spell of his influence in so far as He was thereby moved to enter upon His own redemptive work. "That," as Wernle has said, "was the greatest thing that John did."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reuss, *Apostolic Age*, i. p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *The Beginnings of Christianity*, i. p. 36.

## CHAPTER II.

### JESUS AND THE GOSPEL.

CHRISTIANITY furnishes what the ancient philosophers strove but failed to provide—a working theory of life. It teaches that man's true aim should be not to accumulate material possessions, but to lay hold on righteousness; not to escape suffering, but to welcome sacrifice. In marking out this as the only pathway to inward peace and to communion with God<sup>1</sup> it differentiates itself from paganism. Although attempts have been made to represent it as a mere syncretistic development of previous religions, comparison with these, even if that of the Old Testament be included, only serves to bring out in clear relief its essential originality and independence. In the Hellenistic world religion was little else than a jumble of mythology, and had been inseparably bound up with State-established ritual. Christianity signalized its advent by creating a uniform religious belief entirely free from such trammels, and this soon found fitting expression in the external organization of the Church.

The programme of Christianity was in marked con-

<sup>1</sup> Augustine rightly interpreted the Christian position when he said, "Our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee," and not less truly has Dante affirmed that "in the doing of His will lies our peace."

trast to that of paganism, and herein lay the potency of its triumph over paganism. It is significant that the religion of Jesus made its appeal, and with success, to those who had vainly sought satisfaction in Hellenistic piety. While the enactments of national religions and the empty vagaries of mythology left them cold, their spiritual need was fully met by the simple tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ. From despised Nazareth there sprang up a world-wide brotherly fellowship, conscious of spiritual union through a common faith in Jesus as Lord of all, and cemented by mutual love: "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4<sup>32</sup>). "We must bear in mind the gulf which divided the Jew from the Roman, in order to appreciate the miracle wrought by the first preachers of the Gospel. In all the new churches tables of communion were set up, and at these the Jew sat side by side with the Greek and the Roman, the slave sat beside the freeman, the poor beside the rich, all on the same level, without distinction, without privilege, eating the same bread, drinking from the same cup. Such was the equality and fraternity of the early Christians, suddenly manifesting itself in a world full of division, hatred, and bitterness, as was the Roman world in the first century." <sup>1</sup> In this warm atmosphere of universal brotherhood national differences and social antagonisms melted away, until about 200 A.D. a slave could become bishop of Rome. The sense of belonging to a common body, inspired by the same essential principles of faith and action, combined with the inherent power of the gospel message to move men's hearts, led to widespread

<sup>1</sup> Stapfer, *Palestine in the Time of Christ*, p. 129 f.

acceptance of the new religion, especially among those classes which the current philosophies failed to impress. Religion took on a novel aspect; enthusiasm was roused; self-denial was eagerly cultivated. It is true that in the subsequent history of the Church Christianity has, to its great detriment, only too frequently, in respect both of doctrine and practice, become mixed up with elements quite foreign to it, but the fact that it has seldom been practised in its purity does not affect its fundamental principles and demands as set forth in the New Testament. Dean Stanley's remark, which so delighted Tennyson, still retains its force: "So far from being effete, Christianity is as yet undeveloped."

### *Essential Content of the Gospel.*

1. *The Kingdom of God: its Nature and the Time and Manner of its Coming.*—The entire message of Jesus is summed up in the idea of the kingdom of God. This is clearly implied in the statement of St. Mark: "After that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching *the gospel of the kingdom of God*" (Mark 1<sup>14</sup>). St. Matthew's favourite phrase, "the kingdom of heaven," seems to be simply a parallel designation which, while used in the same sense, is specially fitted to emphasize its heavenly origin and character as opposed to the kingdom of the world. It has its source in heaven, and its law is the will of the God of heaven. Obviously Jesus was concerned to rescue the idea of the kingdom from the political associations that had gathered round it. In the popular mind it had come to be identified with the

new régime to be established by throwing off the Roman yoke. Nothing but the restoration of the glory of the Davidic throne would satisfy the national aspirations of the Jews. They longed for a Messiah after the pattern described in the 17th Psalm of Solomon. This is a fact of vital importance, because it is only in relation to Judaism, and the political situation existing at the time of His Advent that Jesus and His gospel can be adequately understood. The Jewish people had emerged victoriously from a heroic struggle for freedom against the despotism of the Syrian empire, but only to come under the iron yoke of Rome. Foreign domination, however, was as hateful to them as ever, and they continued to cherish the national hope of a glorious ("temporal") Messianic kingdom with a passionate ardour that led them into rebellion and ultimate ruin. The New Testament references to the slaughter of the Galileans, the party of the Zealots, and the uprising of false Messiahs, all adumbrate the final insurrection which was the prelude to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Now it was during this period of political unrest and incipient revolt that Jesus appeared—a fact not obscurely indicated by the very expressions "Messiah" and "Kingdom of God." By Jesus, however, the title "Messiah" is dissociated from everything material and sensual, and so bound up with the element of suffering that the glorious king conjured up by the Jewish imagination is transformed into "the tragic figure on the cross." He makes it plain that the coming of the kingdom cannot be secured along the lines favoured by the Zealots, or indeed through any human influence or effort. Man's part is to prepare himself for its proper reception. Its

coming will be brought about by the miraculous agency of God Himself, and through the gradual operation of invisible laws.

According to St. Mark, the essential content of the message of Jesus lies in the declaration: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe in the gospel." In this there is certainly a striking verbal coincidence with the Baptist's preaching, yet in the lips of the two speakers the words, so far as they coincide, convey a different meaning. For while homologating the Baptist's teaching, Jesus expands it. John belongs to the old order. His conception of the kingdom is still closely analogous to that of Messianic prophecy, and demands a moral revolution as the indispensable prelude to the restoration of theocratic rule. Jesus, however, strikes a distinctively new and more spiritual note. His message took the form of an "evangel," and was recognized as "good tidings of great joy." He announced Himself as "sent to heal the broken-hearted," and invited the weary and heavy-laden to come to Him for rest. This represents a clear advance upon John's teaching, and at once brought Jesus into collision with the official authorities, whose only idea of religion was that of satisfying the requirements of a God who sternly exacted the most punctilious obedience to a highly developed ceremonial law.

The Gospels contain no definition of the term "kingdom," and the elastic usage of the New Testament makes it difficult to formulate any. It is clear, however, that in its nature it is essentially spiritual. Jesus strips the conception of every shred of worldly and political significance, while retaining such elements in it as were



still calculated to give it vitality and power. Deeply conscious of the antagonism between the two kingdoms of good and evil, of God and the world—a contrast strongly accentuated in the Fourth Gospel—He dramatically pictures the ultimate victory of the good, and sees Himself enthroned in His glory, and His disciples seated upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19<sup>28</sup>). Yet it is a mistake to suppose, as many have done, that these dramatic pictures contain the kernel of Jesus' message, and that all the other forms in which it is expressed are merely secondary. Its meaning can perhaps best be gathered from the parables. These show that it comes by gripping the individual soul which capitulates to God's love and consecrates itself to His service. It is the reign of God in "this and that man"; properly regarded, it is not so much an organized society, as a spirit, an attitude of soul; "it is God Himself in His power. It is not a question of angels and devils, thrones and principalities, but of God and the soul, of the soul and its God."<sup>1</sup> As the realm of God among men, the kingdom can come only when men do the will of God, and it will come in the degree in which they do His will.

From the spiritual character of the kingdom it follows that there is no limit to its scope. It knows no racial distinctions (Mark 13<sup>10</sup>, 14<sup>9</sup>). Although the Jews

<sup>1</sup> So writes Harnack, who forcibly adds this also: "The kingdom has a triple meaning. Firstly, it is something supernatural, a gift from above, not a product of ordinary life. Secondly, it is a purely religious blessing, the inner link with the living God; thirdly, it is the most important experience that a man can have, that on which everything else depends; it permeates and dominates his whole existence, because sin is forgiven and misery banished."—*What is Christianity?* pp. 56, 61 f.

received the first offer of the kingdom, in accordance with the saying of Jesus, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," its actual possession was nevertheless contingent upon their fulfilling the conditions on which alone it can belong to any. As they failed to do so, they forfeited their advantage, and came under the sentence: "Therefore the kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." It knows no social distinctions. The hated tax-gatherer might enter it as easily as the honoured ruler of the synagogue. What counts here is not official rank, or social standing, but spiritual fitness. Here the outcast and the sinner who sincerely repent are preferred before the immaculate Pharisee and the religious dignitary who lack humility, faith, and purity of heart. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost irrespective of their estimation in the eyes of men. His appeal was not to the great or to the righteous, but to sinners who needed salvation. For all those who feel this need, be they even the chief of sinners, the blessings of the kingdom are provided; to all those who are unconscious of this need, be they the most exalted among men, these blessings are denied. It knows no geographical bounds. No external barriers can limit the sweep of a kingdom the conditions of entering which are of an inward and spiritual kind. As St. Paul afterwards declared, it is equally accessible to Jew and Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free. It bears the stamp of universality. Its motto is, "Whosoever will." All who hunger and thirst after righteousness, wherever they may be found, are within the destination of the kingdom.

As the subject is presented in the New Testament, a certain ambiguity attaches both to the conception of the kingdom and to the time and manner of its coming. This arises from the fact that, while sharing with His contemporaries the idea of the two kingdoms—that of God, and that of the world—and of the triumph in the future of the divine kingdom, Jesus also declares that “the kingdom of God cometh not with observation,” but is already present. To Him it is not only future and ideal, but present and actual. In His teaching both of these points of view are stated with equal emphasis, and without any sense of incongruity. Side by side with the plain intimation that the consummation of the kingdom will be realized only in the remote future stands the clear declaration that it is even now a power in the hearts of men. It is “among”<sup>1</sup> men, and comes not externally, or “with observation”; nevertheless its fruits are visible, and it will ultimately reach its perfect realization in the manifold subjection of all things to Christ its head.

Numerically there is in the Gospels a preponderance of passages which speak of the kingdom as still future. Entrance into the kingdom is spoken of by Jesus as if it were a future event, and it is with Him a synonym for eternal life. To each of the Beatitudes there is a promise attached. In answering the Pharisee’s question about when the kingdom of God should come, Jesus declares that it will come suddenly like a flash of lightning. He instructed His disciples to “preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand,” not to proclaim it as already

<sup>1</sup> Not “within you” (A.V. of Luke 17<sup>21</sup>), perhaps, for Jesus is addressing the Pharisees, although not the Pharisees exclusively.

come. On the second advent of the Messiah the kingdom of God will come, and the judgement with it. All this seems to justify the identification of the kingdom of God with the new world about to come.

But, apart from the definite assertion of Jesus that the kingdom is in its beginnings present here and now, there are various passages which preclude us from regarding it merely from the eschatological point of view. (1) Among these must be reckoned certain parables. In those of the mustard-seed and the leaven the small beginnings of the kingdom are contrasted with the magnificent end. At first it attracts no notice, yet at last it shall transform the world. In another parable Jesus speaks of the kingdom as a gradual growth. Like seed cast into the ground, it takes root, grows silently and mysteriously "of itself," and at length, when the process of development is complete, bears fruit. It came in a special sense when Christ began to proclaim His message; it keeps on coming throughout the generations, and will attain its full realization only when "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." Akin to the teaching contained in these parables is that reflected in the saying, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11<sup>12</sup>). While the prophets and the law prepared the way for it, it was still a "far-off, divine event"; now it is so no longer. It is actually being established on the earth, and men are taking forcible possession of it. (2) Jesus points to His miracles as the first signs of the coming kingdom. "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God," He says, "then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (Mark 12<sup>28</sup>). In those types of mental disease which

contemporary opinion attributed to "possession" by an evil spirit<sup>1</sup> Jesus saw the malign influence of evil, and by the potent power of His personality over confiding souls He cured the malady. By expelling the dæmons He not only delivered men from their power, but also destroyed the rule of Satan. (3) In the reply given by Jesus to the Baptist's question, "Art thou he that should come?" the kingdom of God is represented as already present in its saving influence. The coming of the kingdom is seen in the fact that "the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." In the actual effects wrought by the saving activity of Jesus John is asked to see the visible proof of a new age. Destruction of the realm of evil and the relief of suffering were of the very essence of Christ's mission. (4) The kingdom of God comes in the bestowal of forgiveness by the Saviour. He came not only to heal the sick, but also to save the lost. Here at any rate the kingdom is conceived purely as an inward and redemptive power. Neither the nation nor what is exclusively future is under contemplation. The Saviour has in view only converted individuals who become as little children, and live for the kingdom of God.

Naturally, various attempts have been made to explain this seemingly harsh antithesis. Some will have it that the confusion is due to the mixing up of elements taken over from tradition with what is peculiar to our

<sup>1</sup> On this point see (under iii. c.) the writer's article on "Development of Doctrine in the Apocryphal Period" in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary* (extra volume).

Lord. But at most this is only an attempt to account for the apparent incongruity ; it does nothing to remove it. For how are we to distinguish with regard to the contrasted factors in our Lord's recorded delineation so as confidently to assert, *This* is adopted from tradition, *That* is His own ? Certain New Testament expositors (*e.g.* Meyer) consider the words, "The kingdom of God is amongst you," to mean merely that the Messiah was in their midst, and that all our Lord's references to the kingdom as already present are really proleptic. But how on this theory are we to explain the order of the two petitions, "Thy kingdom come," "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" ? Is it reasonable to think that a petition relative to the end of the world should be followed by another having reference to a condition which must be fulfilled before the previous petition can be granted ? It has also been suggested by way of solving the difficulty that in His earlier sayings Jesus spoke of His kingdom only as future, but that He afterwards came to view it as already present, and as destined to undergo an earthly development ; but this theory is not borne out by the facts. More pertinent is it to say : "That which involves a world-historic process must be, at any given moment, both [*sic*] past, present, and future."<sup>1</sup> If, as seems probable, Jesus viewed His kingdom in this comprehensive light, there is no real inconsistency in His speaking of it as present in its beginnings here and now, and yet as still future with respect to its final consummation.

2. *The Conditions of Entrance into the Kingdom :*  
 "Repent, and believe in the gospel."—Christ summons

<sup>1</sup> Stevens, *Theology of the N.T.*, p. 37 f.



men penitently to recognize and confess that they are sinners before God, and to reverse their attitude towards Him. It is true that we cannot come to Him merely in our own strength and by our own resolution, for repentance is "the gift of God"; but it is no less true that in order to satisfy the requirements of Jesus there must be what Montaigne calls "a recanting of the will," and the direction of it into a new channel. When conscience stings, and when by hunger and thirst after righteousness a man is driven to throw himself on the divine mercy, the very consciousness that his sin has been forgiven strengthens in him the will to lead a new life. So Jesus says to the penitent, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go and sin no more." In the case of the prodigal, God so far takes the will for the deed that He is content at first with the confession, "Father, I have sinned," and does not wait for signs of amendment before He brings forth the best robe and the ring. He sees in the returning son not only a voluntary severance from his past, but life purified at its springs. It may take a long time ere the water runs quite clear: his Father sees him as he will be. By the Spirit of God our will to do good is strengthened until it becomes iron.

The Saviour's call, however, is not only to repent of sin, but also to believe *the gospel*. Now the gospel is the declaration that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That is to say, it is a gospel of hope, even for the chief of sinners. It tells us that the way to God is through His Son Jesus Christ, who has revealed Him as the Father, ready to receive with open arms every sinner



who truly seeks Him and reposes in Him a childlike trust. Apart from the exercise of such faith there cannot be established between God and man that mutual relation of Father and child which it is the very object of the gospel to create. The power to become sons of God is conferred by Jesus, who is Himself at once the subject of the gospel and its essential content. He proclaims the sovereignty of God, establishes the kingdom of God as an actual fact, and assures as many as believe on His name of their title to come to the Almighty as their Father. It is only through such trust in God as Jesus demands and inspires that men are delivered from their fears and made steadfast in hope. Secure in this faith, the children of God are neither terrified by dreams nor disturbed by the drivel of soothsayers. To them the stars do but celebrate their Creator's praise. For them hell and dæmons lose their terrors. From men who can only kill the body they have nought to fear. To God alone belongeth power, and He is a loving and merciful Father.

3. The duties devolving upon those who would share in the blessings of the kingdom, or rather the moral and spiritual qualifications needful for membership in it, are set forth in the Beatitudes. Our Lord makes it very plain what manner of men the members of His kingdom must be. They must be poor in spirit, bemoaning sin, gentle<sup>1</sup> and ardently desiring righteousness; pure in heart, and merciful; peaceable and patient under ill-treatment. These terms, which are given in the order of experience, furnish a spiritual thermometer by which

<sup>1</sup> Or *humble* (Moffatt). The word "meek" (A.V.) is no longer quite a correct rendering of *πραῖς*.

men may gauge the warmth of their piety and the depth of their zeal. They set before us the picture of the blessed of Jesus, and it is impossible to contemplate it without a deepening conviction that His kingdom is "not of this world." A Christian disciple is a citizen of heaven. The whole passage is characterized by profound spirituality. To read it is like taking a plunge into another world. It stands in strong contrast to the materialism by which we are surrounded. One rises from the perusal of it with the feeling that it is unquestionably the noblest ideal picture ever drawn. What is here promised to the children of the kingdom is just that after which they long and strive—the kingdom of God, heaven, perfect blessedness in the vision of God. This is their inheritance. And the way to inherit the kingdom is plainly indicated. No one can participate in it by calling Jesus Lord, Lord, while not doing the things which He says. The essential passports to the blessings of the kingdom are the inward possession and outward exhibition of the qualities over which He pronounces His benediction.

These are the manifest expression of the soul of Jesus, the reflexion of His own spirit. With the exception of the second, which as the sinless Son of God He could not share, He has Himself nobly exemplified them in word and deed. Did He not, though He was rich, for our sakes become poor? Was He not gentle and lowly of heart, calling on men to follow Him in this respect, and so find rest unto their souls? Who ever hungered and thirsted after righteousness like Him whose meat and drink it was to do the will of God? Who was ever more merciful and compassionate than

He, the good Physician? Who ever had so pure a heart as He who knew no sin, and was made sin for us? Who has done so much in the interests of peace as He who has made peace between earth and heaven? Who was ever persecuted for righteousness' sake like Him who was nailed to the ignominious cross? So He lived and suffered, and now He ever liveth in that blessed vision of God which He here promises to them that are His. But the promise of sharing in His glory is for those only in whom is found the same mind that was in Him. All who would be members of His kingdom are required to be imitators of Him who has "left us an example that we should follow his steps"—to show likeness to the Prince and obedience to His laws.

This first picture of discipleship shadows forth all that followed. To the end Jesus knew no other Christianity than this: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." In all the apostolic writings, however different the modes of thought distinctive of the various writers, we find the same noble striving after a heavenly life, carried on in the exercise of the graces here unfolded, and in face of the persecution here described. Throughout there is the significant paradox, "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." To our human nature such strenuous endeavour after righteousness is not easy, but out of the earthly material there may be evolved the higher life. Christ's kingdom is destined to rise on the ruins of the kingdom of this world. Men's earthly surroundings are to be viewed as opportunities given them for striving after a higher kingdom, that which Jesus has revealed, and entrance into which, together with the

cultivation of the moral and spiritual qualities demanded of its members, shall bring them in the end to where He is now, that they may behold His glory. The ideal attitude for the Christian is to be daily looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who is ever calling to men alike from cross and throne: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the mourners, the gentle, the yearners after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peaceable, the persecuted: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

4. The gospel of the kingdom of God includes also the doctrines of the atonement, the resurrection, the second advent, and the last judgement. As proclaimed by Jesus Himself these events were necessarily future, but that He foretold them with perfect clearness can be denied only by utterly discrediting the Gospels. Let it suffice to refer to the testimony of one of them. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 10<sup>28</sup>). "The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men; and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again" (Matt. 16<sup>22 f.</sup>). "When the Son of Man shall come again in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25<sup>31 f.</sup>). So far as the death and resurrection of Jesus are concerned, these predictions have been fulfilled. Out of love to man, and in obedience to God, He endured the cross. On the third day thereafter He rose from the dead. What He taught with reference to His second

coming and the last judgement still remains to be fulfilled. But His resurrection is the pledge to His people that their ultimate destiny is not to die, but to live, and that He will raise to an endless life those who are His. This will take place at the last day, when He shall also judge the wicked, who, though sharing in the resurrection, will be shut out from eternal life.

*The Gospel in its Original Historical Setting.*

Even eternal truth may be historically conditioned, and the men who preached the gospel as a revelation from God were also children of their time, who spoke and wrote within the circle of thought marked out by their age. It is therefore not surprising to find that in their descriptions of the external conditions amid which supernatural influences make themselves actively felt there is, apart from some difference of terminology, little that is distinctive or unique. Their general view of the world is that commonly accepted among their contemporaries, whether Hellenistic or Jewish. The influence of their inherited traditions, as well as of their actual environment, is apparent also in their handling of evangelical truth. Everywhere in the New Testament we find traces of the deep impression left on the minds of the writers by their Old Testament training. From this source their language is coloured, their ideas enriched, and their doctrinal teaching established. And, if in a less degree, the pervasive and subtle spirit of Hellenism, which had become so great a force not only in the Diaspora but even in Palestine itself, is

likewise undeniably reflected in the New Testament writings. While, however, this must be acknowledged, its significance should not be exaggerated. Nothing illustrates more impressively the sober style and quiet objectivity of the Synoptic Gospels than the contrast they exhibit to the numerous idealizing and unhistorical Apocryphal Gospels circulating in the early centuries. The *Protevangelium* of James, and the *Gospel of Thomas*, which embody traditions as old as the second century, treat in quite a legendary way of the infancy and childhood of Jesus. Alongside of such delineations the simple restrained narratives of St. Matthew and St. Luke stand out unique. Yet even with respect to these it has been held that the mythical element, so much affected in their time, has entered to some extent into their representation of the wonders which accompanied the birth of Jesus. St. Matthew has also, it is said, introduced into his account of the Passion certain unhistorical prodigies. The reference is, of course, to the opening of the graves and the resurrection of many of the saints (27<sup>52</sup>). But these are merely opinions, not established facts,<sup>1</sup> and in any case the uniquely trustworthy character of the Synoptic Gospels is indisputable.

With more reason it may be claimed that St. John's Gospel discovers certain points of contact with contemporary culture. It has even been called "a Christian remodelling of Platonic thoughts."<sup>2</sup> Its doctrine of

<sup>1</sup> "These things are *not improbable*, if Christ Himself was a miraculous Being. It is reasonable to think that if He really was, in His own complex Person, the Miracle of miracles, He would be a centre of miraculous manifestations."—Morrison, *Com. on Matthew's Gospel*, Introd., p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Souverain, *Le Platonisme dévoilé*.

the Logos stands in some relation to the Hellenistic philosophy of the period. Its ruling contrast of light and darkness it shares with Greek mysticism. On the assumption of the Johannine authorship the doctrine of the Paraclete cannot, however, imply acquaintance with Montanism, which did not arise until about A.D. 130, and St. John's active opposition to the heretic Cerinthus seems scarcely compatible with alleged affinities between his Gospel and Gnosticism. Anything like direct dependence on any or all of these types of thought is precluded by the fresh and living portraiture of the historical Jesus as the Incarnate Word, the manifested glory of God, full of grace and truth.

As regards the Acts of the Apostles, it has been contended that the writer, when dealing with matters within his own horizon, follows the practice of his age in recording as simple realities angelic appearances, miraculous cures and deliverances, and revelations conveyed in dreams and visions. According to Meyer, "in the first portion here and there, a post-apostolic formation of legend is unmistakable,"<sup>1</sup> but this is a debatable point.

The Pauline Epistles certainly contain instances of Scriptural exegesis analogous to those of the Jewish Midrash, and of the allegorical method of Alexandrian Judaism. Traces of Hellenistic influence, moreover, appear in the Apostle's references to the natural knowledge of God (Rom. 1<sup>19</sup>), the law written in the heart and conscience (Rom. 2<sup>15</sup>), as well as in his adoption of certain conceptions of the Stoic philosophy, of which more anon. Further, his distinction between the inner

<sup>1</sup> Com. on *Acts*, Introd., p. 7 (Eng. trans.).



and the outward man, and his assertion that all life proceeds from death (1 Cor. 15<sup>36</sup>) are distinctly Platonic.

The clearest example of a New Testament book being cast in the mould of old-world conceptions is furnished by the Apocalypse of St. John. It is written on the model of the Jewish Apocalyptic literature, of which the Book of Daniel is the leading type. Revelations are communicated in the form of visions, which are explained to the seer by the interpreting angel; and the dramatic conflicts between the heavenly and the earthly powers finally result in the victory of the hosts of God. But for its essentially Christian elements, its songs of triumph, and its glowing words of comfort, this book might well form part of the literature of later Judaism.

While thus historically conditioned, and employing terms readily comprehensible to the contemporary world, the New Testament writers draw a clear line of demarcation between their own message and the religious views current in their time. For them, acknowledging as they did but one God, the Father of Jesus Christ, whose Spirit is everywhere present, the universe is necessarily emptied of the numerous deities with which paganism conceived it to be inhabited. Nor were they at all alive to our modern ideas of natural law and mediate causes. They saw the hand of the Almighty Father directly controlling all the phenomena of nature. Alongside of Him they found no place for other "gods." Their position is clearly stated in the words of St. Paul: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there

be gods many, and lords many), to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him ; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him " (I Cor. 8<sup>4-6</sup>). In their estimation these " gods " are either nonentities or devils (I Cor. 10<sup>19f.</sup>), vanquished by the power of Christ, who has overcome the world, *i.e.* everything opposed to the will of God, and incapable of working harm to those whose faith secures to them the same victory. Thus if, as was natural, the first Christian preachers shared the general views of their time, and were not supernaturally endowed with larger and more correct conceptions in the region of the exact sciences, they also rose above them in the matter of a truer apprehension of things unseen and eternal. The gospel they preached cut itself entirely adrift from the ancient conception of the world to which the Hellenistic religions remained bound. Although in the lips of its messengers it retained the colouring of its early environment, it is nevertheless in its essential content altogether detached from time, for " the end of their conversation " was nothing else than this : " Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." In spite of its being historically conditioned, it is " the eternal Gospel." Caught in the tideway of Hellenism, it stood firm as a rock, for then as now it represented " those things which cannot be shaken," and " a kingdom which cannot be moved."

## CHAPTER III.

### JESUS AND THE GENTILE WORLD.

As bearing significantly on the truth that the gospel is universal in its scope, and destined for all mankind, it is pertinent to refer to the statement contained in the account given in Luke 4<sup>25 ff.</sup> of our Lord's introduction to His ministry. When rejected in His own town of Nazareth, He points His sceptical townsmen to the fact that in Old Testament times, although there were many widows and many lepers in Israel, only a Sidonian and a Syrian were singled out as the objects of the divine favour and mercy. It is further significant that He displaces from "the Messianic table-round" the children of the kingdom who would have none of His message in favour of Gentiles possessing the moral qualifications fitting them to sit down with the patriarchs, and that in setting forth the ideal of human neighbourliness He should have chosen a Samaritan as the typical representative of this virtue. Indeed, as we shall see, on every occasion of a recorded meeting between Him and a Gentile, He proceeded, with an absolute disregard of Jewish prejudices and on the broad basis of human brotherhood, to reveal "spiritual capacity in the alien." Instead of conceiving the human race as composed of Jew and Gentile, He viewed it rather as consisting of

the good and the evil, of those who welcomed the new life, and those who refused it. All this shows that in the mind of Jesus there was no idea of limiting the blessings of the gospel to any particular section of the human race. So far from this, His whole attitude justifies the verdict of St. Paul that "He died for all."

The few instances in which the Gospels allude to the dealings of Jesus with Gentiles are of special interest and importance as exhibiting the possession on their part of qualities which, although conspicuously lacking in the case of His Jewish fellow-countrymen, were demanded by Him as essential in the members of His kingdom. Only two of the five cases in point are directly concerned with Greeks,<sup>1</sup> but it will be advisable to include them all in our survey, seeing that they combine to illustrate the matter in hand.<sup>2</sup>

### *The Story of the Roman Centurion*

(Matt. 8<sup>5-13</sup> ; Luke 7<sup>2-9</sup>).

This man came to Jesus as He was entering Capernaum, with the request that He would heal one of his servants who was sick of the palsy—a request which He granted after passing a high eulogium upon his faith. He said

<sup>1</sup> Two other cases occur in which our Lord seems to have come into contact with Greeks, although there is no express reference to them as such, namely, (1) the healing of the demoniac (Matt. 8<sup>28 ff.</sup> and parallel passages) on the eastern coast of the Lake of Tiberias, where, as indicated by the presence of so large a herd of swine, the population was mainly Gentile, and (2) the healing of the deaf mute in the district of the Decapolis, which was largely inhabited by Greeks.

<sup>2</sup> The passages containing these narratives are here accepted *simpliciter*, without entering into any critical discussion regarding their genuineness.

that He had not found its like in Israel. What, then, was it about this soldier's faith that gave Jesus such peculiar satisfaction and joy? For one thing, the fact that it was found in a stranger, an educated pagan; in a man who had had no light by which to guide his life except that which God has put into all His creatures; in a man who had no higher revelation than the best moral philosophy could offer him; in a man whose surroundings and training and circumstances generally were all against his accepting the gospel. No memories of childhood helped him to believe, no faith his fathers had owned, no direct acquaintance with Jesus so far as we know, for this happened early in our Lord's ministry. It was a faith that could only have grown through many difficulties, thought and worked its way through many obstacles, a faith that could only have come to a man who had been true to the better instincts of our nature, and had excluded from its sanctuary the immoralities and puerilities of paganism. Another distinguishing feature of the centurion's faith was the conception of Christ as a superhuman Person. He had implicit trust in the absolute power of Jesus to move all creatures and control all forces of the universe by the mere act of His will. From his own experience as a soldier he had learned to exercise this faith. He was a man at once under authority and in authority. He knew what it was to have behind him the imperial power of Rome, and what it was to obey it. One syllable from the General of the Roman army, and the legions moved as animated by one mind, and each man in the ranks was ready to go, though it were to death. He had soldiers under his own command also, and when he said to one, "Go,"

he went, and to another, "Come," he came. Even he himself, captain of only a hundred, had but to speak and it was done. So to his soldier-mind Christ was a great Captain, wielding power over a higher kingdom than Cæsar's, exercising authority over the world of spirits, and over the powers of nature, saying to any of them as he said to his soldiers, "Do this, and he doeth it." Nowhere in the New Testament perhaps do we find a clearer and deeper conception of the authority of Christ over all the forces of the universe than the centurion thus reached. He had learned the omnipotence of the word of command, and to him Jesus was Captain in a greater kingdom than his own—in the vast unseen world of powers and spirits. "Diseases must obey Him," he argued, "as my soldiers obey me"; therefore "speak the word only," he said, "and my servant shall be healed." At first he had asked the Saviour to come to his house, but on second thoughts he felt that to be unnecessary. He had but to speak the word and his soldiers were ready to obey. Could not Christ do the same? He would not trouble Him to come down; merely let Him give the word of command, and his servant would be healed. The centurion not only had this splendid conception of Christ as Captain of the spiritual unseen world, but he boldly applies his conception to the case in point. Distance presents no difficulty; Christ's servants are ready to His hand. A word from Him is enough, for it is the word of command. It is a true conception. There is no profounder truth. God spake, and the world was made. The divine will is the secret of all that is. Time and again Jesus proved Himself divine by a *word*.

The centurion's was indeed wonderful faith, and its daring originality excited wonder in the mind of the Saviour: "He marvelled." It was the wonder, not of surprise, but of appreciation. "I have not found so great faith," He said, "no, not in Israel." In His experience it was, so far, unique. The Israelites, for whose fathers God had wrought such marvels, should have excelled all others in the strength of their faith. Yet here, as often, the last was first, and the first last. This Roman soldier's faith surpassed not only that of other Gentiles, but that of the Jews themselves. "The faith of the Jews, prejudiced by their peculiar notions of the Messiahship, could not as yet raise itself to a just intuition of the superhuman greatness of Christ. But the pagan, viewing Christ as Lord of the world of spirits, had reached a point which the Apostles themselves were only to attain at a later period. And here we have a sign that the true and high intuition of the person of Christ was to come rather from the standpoint of paganism than of Judaism."<sup>1</sup>

*The Case of the Syrophœnician Woman*

(Matt. 15<sup>21-28</sup>; Mark 7<sup>24-30</sup>).

Desiring to remain incognito, Jesus crossed the Galilean border in the direction of Tyre and Sidon. But the fame of His healing power had gone before Him (cf. Mark 3<sup>28</sup>), and a pagan woman belonging to that region, whose daughter was a demoniac, implored Him to expel the unclean spirit. The answer was not en-

<sup>1</sup> Neander, *Life of Christ*, Bohn's trans., p. 259.



couraging. It took the form of a curt declaration that His mission was only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and that it was "not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." Although this treatment seems strangely harsh, as well as foreign to the usual practice of our Lord, it in no way invalidates the fact that He had "other sheep who were not of this fold," and that He came to set up a world-wide empire in the hearts of men. The explanation must be sought in the special circumstances of the case. The Saviour, after His open breach with the Pharisees, and His repudiation of their idolized "tradition," was seeking seclusion and rest, and intimate private intercourse with His own disciples, whereas to accede to this woman's request would probably entail the upsetting of His plans and the bringing of a crowd around Him. Yet He wished to relieve the woman's distress, and did so after thoroughly testing her faith. A member of the Syrian branch of the Phœnician race, she speaks Greek and worships Greek gods, but, aware of the reputation of Jesus, she believes that He can help her in her extremity. To her application He replies that the Jews have the first claim upon His services, and in spite of the depreciatory terms in which, making use of the current Jewish language of His time, He speaks of the Gentiles, the woman at once accepts the inferior position thus assigned her, but cleverly turns the metaphor so as to make it sufficiently cover her need. As a Gentile "dog," she will be content with the crumbs that fall from the children's table. On this footing, and in recognition of her importunity as well as of her great faith, the boon is granted.

Here we have a shining instance of faith on the part

of a pure heathen. In view of his very friendly relations to the Jews, the Roman centurion may possibly have been a Jewish proselyte of the gate, although there is no express statement to this effect; but in the Syro-phœnician woman at all events we have an illustration of pagan faith that contrasts brightly with the prevailing unbelief of the Jews. It was, moreover, a clear indication to the Twelve that "in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek," and that the blessings of the gospel would not be limited to the house of Israel, but would be the reward of faith wherever found.

*Jesus and the Woman of Samaria (John 4<sup>5-38</sup>).*

This is one of the most beautiful incidents recorded in the New Testament. "Wearied with his journey" from Galilee, Jesus has sat down to rest on the parapet of Jacob's well at Sychar. He is alone, having, in disregard of Jewish prejudice, sent His disciples into the village to buy food. The hour is about six in the evening. Presently a Samaritan woman comes to draw water. She is poor, for the days have gone by when women of position performed this work (Gen. 24<sup>15</sup>, 29<sup>9-10</sup>; Ex. 2<sup>16</sup>). Jesus asks her for water to slake His thirst, thus opening the interview on the level of mere mutual humanity; but, with characteristic eagerness to seize every opportunity of fulfilling His divine commission, He takes care to confer on this woman a boon far greater than that which He Himself has craved. She is utterly taken aback at His request, and expresses her surprise, for owing to the bitter religious feud between the two peoples it was a thing unheard of that a Jew should

ask such a service at the hands of a woman of Samaria. In His next words Jesus lifts the conversation on to a higher plane by ignoring the immediate point raised—that of the distinction between Jew and Samaritan—and by affirming that were His questioner aware of “the gift of God” in the person and work of His Son and of the real character of Him to whom she was speaking, she would have asked of Him, and He would have given her, “living water.” In her spiritual thirst she would have sought the satisfaction of her need at the fountain of eternal life. How can this weary and thirsty traveller speak thus? Whence can he draw supplies from the perennial stream which he represents to be at his command? Is he a greater than Jacob through whose son Joseph the Samaritans had inherited the famous well? So reasons this hearer. Still further developing the parable of the living water, Jesus answers not so much the words that had fallen from the woman’s lips as the thoughts that were rising in her mind with the dawning conviction that the water which Christ was prepared to give differed somehow from that for which He asked. There is, He declares, an essential difference between the water furnished by the enterprise of Jacob and that to be supplied as the result of Christ’s finished work. In the one case the water quenches thirst only for the time; one may drink of it, but he will soon again be as thirsty as before. In the other case the water quenches thirst for ever, and removes once for all the feeling of unsatisfied need; those who drink of it shall thirst no more, for it shall be in them a constant spring of water, issuing in everlasting life. The attractive picture of this endless stream of life, which would at

once satisfy her own requirements and save her the toil of carrying supplies to others, leads the Samaritan, although as yet unable to form a true conception of the promised gift, to proffer the request, "Sir, give me this water."

Jesus and the woman have now exchanged places, so to speak, and she in turn becomes the suitor. With swift intuition of what was in her mind as to the necessity of others participating in the desired "gift," if this part of her daily task was to cease, He bids her summon her husband. To her somewhat abashed but non-committal reply, "I have no husband," Jesus answers by laying bare the details of her life, pointing out that she has had five husbands (from whom she may have been separated either by death or by legal divorcement), and is now living with one to whom that title does not apply. It is the element of truth in her statement that constitutes her fault. The conviction is gradually borne in upon her that she is talking with a prophet from whom none of her secrets are hid, and that with an accredited messenger of God once more abroad in the land disputed points relating to His worship may possibly be cleared up. She therefore submits to Him the crucial question concerning the relative claims of the temple on Gerizim and the temple of Jerusalem, the Samaritan and Jewish sanctuaries respectively, to be the true centre of worship.<sup>1</sup> Will He pronounce in favour of the custom of her ancestors, or of the contention of the Jews?

<sup>1</sup> "R. Jochanan, going to Jerusalem to pray, passed by Gerizim. A certain Samaritan seeing him, asked him, Whither goest thou? I am, saith he, going to Jerusalem to pray. To whom the Samaritan, Were it not better for thee to pray in this holy mountain than in that cursed house?"

Instead, however, of dealing with the rival claims, the Lord proceeds to announce the approach of a new era which should be characterized by an altered conception of worship. The old order, according to which the worship even of the true God was ceremonial, sectional, and local, is about to pass away, and a new religious world, in which men everywhere shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, about to come into being. For the present indeed Jerusalem, as the source from which was to emanate the great salvation which was to elevate religion to a higher level, must remain the seat of worship. To this extent, in recognition of the orderly fulfilment of the divine purpose, He certainly upholds the Jewish claim. Theirs is an intelligent worship; that of the Samaritans is not. The Samaritans do homage to God without being acquainted with His character as revealed by the prophets in preparation for the ultimate advent of the Saviour; the Jews worship Him as those who look for the promised salvation in which the divine will is being made known to them by progressive stages. But the superiority of the worship at Jerusalem, which was due to the salvation destined to go forth from it, would cease so soon as that should appear. There is thus no longer a burning question regarding the religious centre of the world; the teaching of Jesus has put an end to all such disputation. The rival claims of Gerizim and Jerusalem are not determined by Him, for they vanish in the revelation of a universal religion. In view of the introduction of the completed redemption—so imminent that “the hour *now is*,” having already been ushered in by His proclamation of the kingdom of God—the old distinctions of degrees of knowledge dis-

appear. The ideal worshipper will not worship merely in the letter, like the Jews, nor will his be a worship of falsehood as that of the Samaritans virtually was, owing to its repudiation of the revelation and promises given to the Jews. The Incarnation renders possible a new worship. By opening up a way to immediate fellowship with God it enables men to worship in spirit, and by fully revealing God to man it enables them to worship in truth. A meeting-point is thus provided between the true God and the true worshipper, and all the conditions are present for the exercise of such worship as the Father seeks. In His nature God is pure spirit, with no limitations of space and time, and the presupposition of true spiritual worship is communion of life with Him. To this the Samaritan replies that for the absolute determination of such truths she must await the coming of the Messiah or Christ; only He could pronounce upon them with authority. Whereupon Jesus makes the sublime revelation: "I that speak unto thee am he." While acknowledging Him as a prophet, she has also signified that she is waiting for Him who is more than a prophet; and in the course of a quiet conversation during which, in bright contrast to the attitude of His own Jewish compatriots, she has shown such a receptive spirit, Jesus makes Himself known as the long-looked-for Teacher and Saviour of men.

At this juncture His disciples returned, and they marvelled to find Him ignoring Jewish sentiment by talking in public to a woman. Could He either want anything at her hands or desire to give her instruction? They were puzzled, but asked no questions. Leaving her water-pot, the woman hastened to invite the men of



the city to come and see the wonderful stranger who could read her life like an open book, and whose revelation of spiritual truth actually seemed to mark him out as the Christ. Her glowing words to the men of Sychar had the desired effect: they were soon making their way towards Him. Meanwhile the disciples begged Jesus to partake of the food they had brought, but He had requirements more urgent than those of the body, and meat the virtue of which they knew not. As they wondered whether some one had supplied Him with food during their absence, He explained that His real food consisted in carrying out His Father's will and in completing His work, which embraced Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles alike. The seed was being sown, and the harvest would come. Indeed the spiritual harvest, of which the fields around them were the image, was already ripe for the reaper, and its first-fruits appeared in the procession even now wending its way from the Samaritan town. Already the harvest of New Testament times was foreshadowed in this first general reception of the redemptive word beyond the confines of Judæa. In the spiritual sphere the reaper benefits by the toil of the sowers who have gone before him in preparing the way of the Lord; but sower and reaper shall rejoice together over the ingathered fruit. For in the higher kingdom the work is divided so that "one soweth and another reapeth." The enthusiasm, the hopefulness, and the joy of the Saviour are vividly reflected in the narrative—enthusiasm over the breaking down of all barriers dividing men from God and from one another, hopefulness with regard to the world-wide harvest of which these Samaritans were the first-fruits, and joy over the



successful accomplishment of a part of the work given Him to do.

Very significant is the fact that it was to an uneducated and erring daughter of an alien and ignorant race that Jesus first imparted the revelation that true religion is no longer bound up with a particular people, or with a special shrine in a fixed place, but is the divinely ordained birthright of all men everywhere. He proclaims the necessity of a worship in spirit and in truth, and it was peculiarly fitting that this new teaching which denationalizes religion,<sup>1</sup> and makes it catholic and universal, should be given on non-Jewish soil. The true worship of God as Spirit is neither ritualistic, local, nor exclusive, but is purely spiritual, and can proceed only from spirits allied to Him through the reception of the truth which Christ has revealed. External acts of worship are in themselves of no value, and the narrow forms of worship to which the Jewish mind was wedded are done away with by the full revelation of the spiritual nature of God. It is by the organ of the Spirit that man worships God, and between the organ and the object of worship there must be affinity in point of character. So Jesus depicts the spiritual worship of the new dispensation, the perfect worship in the period of the latter day.

*Jesus and the Samaritan Leper (Luke 17<sup>15-18</sup>).*

Just outside a certain village there met Jesus ten lepers, of whom nine were Jews, and one a Samaritan.

<sup>1</sup> "The word of our Teacher remained not in Judæa alone, as philosophy did in Greece; but was diffused over the whole world, over every nation, and village, and town."—Clement, *Strom.* vi. 18.

Their common affliction, which banished them from the society of other men, led them to associate together, notwithstanding the proverbial hostility between the two nationalities. Standing at a distance, as lepers were bound to do, they appealed to the Saviour to exercise upon them His healing power. Jesus replied by telling them to show themselves to the priests, without whose certificate no leper was entitled to regard himself as cured. While in the act of carrying out this instruction, they were cleansed. Only one of them, and that the Samaritan, was at pains to return in order to thank Jesus, and in Him God, for the boon that had been granted. Whereas all the others made haste to return to their life in the world, the Samaritan, like Naaman the Syrian (2 Kings 5<sup>15</sup>), had a deep sense of the divine mercy, and gave it fervent expression. The contrast between the grateful susceptibility of "this stranger"<sup>1</sup> and the callous ingratitude shown by the Jews is pointedly emphasized by the Saviour. Indeed the main purpose of the narrative, which is peculiar to "the Gentile Gospel," is perhaps to record the fact that one of the lepers was a Samaritan, and that he alone displayed gratitude, although the others as Jews were under still greater obligation than he to give thanks.

### *Jesus and the Greeks (John 12<sup>20-28</sup>).*

On the occasion of the last Jewish Passover observed by our Lord, "certain Greeks" approached Philip the

<sup>1</sup> The epithet ἀλλογενής, "one of another nation," seems to indicate that our Lord reckoned the Samaritans as Gentiles, although it may merely be, as De Wette thinks, a description of them according to their origin.

apostle with the request: "Sir, we would see Jesus." Their individuality is not further disclosed, nor do we know whence they came. Apparently, however, they were neither Hellenistic Jews nor pure pagans, but proselytes of the gate who were in the habit of going up (*ἀναβαίνοντων*) to Jerusalem to keep the Passover.<sup>1</sup> The scene of the incident was probably the outer court of the Temple. That the petition was dictated by no idle curiosity or other unworthy motive is manifest from the reception it met with on the part of the Saviour. When Herod, who had also long desired to meet Him, found himself in His presence, and in the highest good spirits began to question Him about religion and His teaching, Jesus "answered him never a word," because he was steeped in vice and insincerity, and was incapable of faith in goodness. But to the message of these earnest-minded Greeks, conveyed to Him at the great crisis of His life, He replied in words quivering with emotion and charged with the deepest significance. "They were genuine descendants of their illustrious countrymen Socrates and Plato, whose utterances, written or unwritten, were one long prayer for light and truth, one deep unconscious sigh for a sight of Jesus."<sup>2</sup>

These Greek pilgrims to the Feast were fortunate in their selection of an intermediary. As a keen inquirer himself, and as one for whom it was no new thing to guide others to the truth (John 1<sup>45</sup> f.), Philip would rejoice to be the bearer of so congenial a request. Yet, in view of the fact that these men were Gentiles, and

<sup>1</sup> That the ranks of Jewish proselytes included a number of "devout Greeks" may be inferred also from Acts 17<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> A. B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve*, p. 311 (2nd ed.).

that compliance with their wish would mean a distinct religious innovation, he resolved to consult his intimate friend and fellow-disciple Andrew before taking the definite step of broaching the matter to the Master. This resulted in their decision jointly to inform Jesus. From the fact that the two disciples who are here mentioned as bringing Greeks to Jesus were natives of Bethsaida, and themselves bore Greek names, it may perhaps be inferred that that place had been to some extent Hellenized, or at all events that its inhabitants were more or less familiar with Greek.<sup>1</sup>

The intimation of the desire of these Greeks to obtain a personal introduction to Jesus with the view of opening their hearts to Him deeply impressed the Saviour. No details of the interview are given, but it is reasonable to suppose that it took place, and that in presence of the disciples and of the bystanders (vv. 23, 29). Nor does our Lord's recorded answer to the disciples deal specifically with the point raised ; it relates only to the profound significance of the incident with reference to His impending death. Through His crucifixion and resurrection the way would be cleared for the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. In order to the triumphant completion of His work it was necessary that as the representative of humanity He should die, just as the wheat-corn must fall into the ground and die if it is to yield much fruit. Death is the condition of increased life, and the fulness of the blessing destined for the world can be realized only through His death. In the

<sup>1</sup> Bethsaida lay to the east of the Jordan. Considering the wide connotation of the name "Galilee," it seems unnecessary to assume the existence of a second Bethsaida because of the description given in the Fourth Gospel.

sphere of Christian discipleship as well as in that of Nature death is the condition of the richest life. Christ's followers must strip themselves of the temporal, in order to win the eternal life ; and for those who do so blissful fellowship with Him is in store. For Christ Himself also glorification is reached by means of death. His own people were about to put the copestone upon their unbelief by putting Him to death ; but so far from thereby compassing His destruction, they would only usher in the day of His triumph, when multitudes should yield themselves to Him as Saviour and Lord.

The conjunction of circumstances was such as to agitate even the placid soul of Jesus. In contemplation of the judgement about to descend on the chosen people, and of His own death as the means by which it would be effected, He experienced a great conflict of emotions, in which the glad consciousness of the near accomplishment of His work for "all the ends of the earth" contended with sorrow for the fate of Israel, and the horror of death with the firm resolve of obedience. Could He think of deliverance from so cruel a dilemma ? The thought momentarily crossed His mind (" Father, save me from this hour "), but only to be immediately dismissed (" But no—for this cause came I unto this hour "), and then with calm decision He went on to pray : " Father, glorify thy name " ; show to the world through these Greeks who represent it that in My death is fulfilled Thy gracious purpose for the redemption of all mankind.

There can be little doubt that the significance evidently attached by Jesus to the acceptance of His gospel by the Greeks was due to His recognition of the fact that they represented the channel through which His

revelation was to be transmitted to the civilized world. The inquiry made by these strangers was a matter of first-rate importance for the establishment of His universal kingdom, and it is not surprising that when it came to His ears He was visibly touched. Exhibitions of spiritual sensibility never failed to appeal to Him, but in this instance He was peculiarly affected owing to the prospect opened up for the evangelization of the world. Nothing could have brought into stronger relief the stupendous results that were to flow from His sufferings than this spontaneous application of the Greeks to be admitted to His presence, and with ecstatic elevation of soul He exclaimed: "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." From this declaration, as well as from what He says about the necessity of His death and about self-sacrifice as the path to glory for His disciples, we may gather how profound was the emotion shown by Jesus in connexion with this event. On each of the occasions on which the Gospel narratives record His appreciation of Gentile faith the soul of Jesus was deeply moved; but in this instance, because of the peculiar commingling of sadness with joy, His emotion was most signally stirred.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GREEK TO CHRISTIANITY.

#### *The Linguistic Merits of Greek.*

No one will dispute the dictum of Augustine that "the Greek tongue holds the highest place among the languages of the Gentiles."<sup>1</sup> Its value for Christianity, then, consists primarily in the superior quality of the language itself. In respect of its varied and extensive vocabulary, its richness and infinite flexibility, its exact terminology, its capacity to give expression to the loftiest and subtlest ideas, and to distinguish between the finest shades of meaning, there was no language to compare with it. Gibbon aphoristically calls it "a musical and prolific language that gives a soul to the objects of sense and a body to the abstractions of philosophy." Its intrinsic excellence, combined with its widespread currency in the ancient world, gave it unrivalled worth as a medium for the dissemination of Christian truth.

#### *The Significance of the Septuagint or Greek Old Testament.*

In computing the value of Greek for Christianity, account must also be taken of its distinctive position as

<sup>1</sup> *De Civ. Dei*, viii. 10.



the key which unlocked the treasures of the Old Testament. Although Aramaic was the ordinary vernacular speech of Palestine in the time of Christ, Greek was the literary language, and that of the courts and schools. The Hellenistic literature of the period, as represented chiefly by Philo and Josephus, had no doubt a certain Semitic flavour, but it was all in Greek, and largely modelled on the style of the Septuagint.

Translation into Greek meant much for the Old Testament itself. "Had the books and teaching of the Old Testament remained locked up in a comparatively unknown Semitic speech, they could never have become linked with the New Testament in a world-wide propaganda, or formed the basis of a universal religion. Translation into Greek meant that the treasures of their doctrine were thrown open to the Western civilized world, that the sacred literature of a numerically feeble and uninfluential race emerged from its obscurity into the full light of day, and equipped itself to compete for the regard and allegiance of all educated, thoughtful men."<sup>1</sup> What, it may be asked, were the possible alternatives? There were only two,<sup>2</sup> Aramaic and Latin. Some centuries earlier Aramaic was in fairly general use as a medium of trade and intercourse both in East and West, but as a vehicle for religious thought it was in no way comparable to the Greek, to which, fortunately

<sup>1</sup> Geden, *Introd. to the Heb. Bible*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps indeed there was only one. "But for Alexander the Great and his three world-transforming victories of Granicus, Issus, and Arbela, Aramaic, not Greek, would have been the language used by Evangelists and Apostles in the composition of the book which stands at the head of the world's literature."—Hodgkin, *The Trial of our Faith*, p. 303.

for the world, it had to give place. As Deissmann puts it, "an Aramaic gospel-book would have condemned Christianity to remain a Palestinian sect."<sup>1</sup> By the time when the Septuagint translation began to take shape, Latin, with its artificial stateliness and strength, had asserted itself as "the language of jurisprudence, law, government, and military science," but at no time, and least of all at the dawn of the Christian era, could it compete with Greek as an instrument of international communication or of fresh religious thought.

But if the translation into Greek was truly epoch-making for the Old Testament itself, it was not less so for the world at large. "It gained a success such as has fallen to the lot of but few books; it became one of the 'great powers' of history."<sup>2</sup> The ideas of the Septuagint became the heritage both of Hellenistic Judaism and of Christianity, and its influence, theological as well as linguistic, it would be impossible to over-estimate. Although the learned and strictly orthodox Palestinian Jews always looked askance upon it, the unlearned among them who desired to study the Scriptures would certainly have recourse to the Septuagint. As

<sup>1</sup> *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> So writes Deissmann, who points to the tablet of Adrumetum, discovered in 1890, and dating from the third century of our era, as an interesting memorial of the Septuagint. It contains a love-spell in the form of an adjuration of a dæmon "extracted at a certainly much earlier date from the Alexandrian Old Testament. . . . Not only does it reveal what a potent formal influence the Greek Bible, especially the praise-book thereof, exercised upon the classes who lived outside of the official protection of the synagogue and the Church, and who thus elude the gaze of history, but it lets us also surmise that the eternal thoughts of the Old Testament had not wholly lost their germinative powers even where, long after and in an obscure place, they had seemingly fallen among thorns."—*Bible Studies*, p. 271 ff.

regards the Jewish Christians of the Apostolic age it may be assumed that "most of them, the Hebrews as well as the Grecians, used as a rule the Greek translation, while comparatively few resorted to the Hebrew original."<sup>1</sup> Jews resident in Asia Minor practically discarded the Hebrew in favour of the Septuagint. As the Bible of the Greek-speaking Church it was generally regarded as inspired, and greatly promoted the spread of Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Just on this very account, however, it naturally came to be viewed in Jewish circles with deep and growing aversion.

### *The Language of the New Testament.*

The supreme importance of Greek to Christianity lies neither in the intrinsic excellence of that language itself, nor in its having been the medium through which the Old Testament became a world-possession, but in the fact that the New Testament is a Greek book. When, however, it is said that the New Testament was written in Greek, it must be borne in mind that it represents the ordinary vernacular of the period. The conquests of Alexander the Great not only vastly extended the area over which Greek was spoken, but also led to the modification of classical Greek by the Macedonian dialect.

<sup>1</sup> Bleek, *Introd. to the N.T.*, Eng. trans., i. p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> The value of this translation even now should not be overlooked. Not only was it an important source of New Testament Greek, apparently moulding to a large extent its religious vocabulary, and certainly providing the basis for the construction of the nomenclature of Christian theology, but the fact that it is much older than any existing Hebrew text of the Old Testament invests it with a peculiar value for textual criticism.

Instead of the pure Attic of Xenophon and Plato, later writers such as Polybius, Plutarch, and Pausanias adopted the κοινή (διάλεκτος), which, although mainly based upon Attic, appropriated the peculiarities of several dialects as well as many serviceable colloquial forms of expression. The Greek of the Septuagint is also the κοινή as spoken and written in Alexandria. This, moreover, is the language of the New Testament. Not that it was spoken by Jesus. There can scarcely be any reasonable doubt that He habitually used the Aramaic dialect, which was the common speech of Palestine in His day, and that the biblical text with which he was familiar was not the original Hebrew but an Aramaic translation.<sup>1</sup> But in the Apostolic age Christian writers of Jewish extraction all wrote in the κοινή. It became "the official language of the Gospel." The actual linguistic position of the New Testament, then, is that of a standing memorial of late popular colloquial Greek. In the light of the evidence furnished by the non-literary documents of the period this admits of no doubt. The old distinction between classical and "Biblical" Greek is no longer tenable. Numerous instances are given by Deissmann<sup>2</sup> of words formerly supposed to be peculiar to the Bible occurring outside of it in ordinary secular usage and preserved in extant inscriptions and papyri. The language of the Septuagint and of the New Testament cannot therefore be regarded as a "separate linguistic entity"; it is simply "con-

<sup>1</sup> As a resident in Galilee, however, Jesus must have been acquainted with a number of Greek words, and it stands on record that He read inscriptions on Greek coins (Matt. 22<sup>20</sup> f.).

<sup>2</sup> *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 74 ff.

temporary international Greek " with its own distinctive position in the age-long development of the Greek tongue. This is not to say, however, that there are no " Biblical " Greek words in the New Testament, but Deissmann estimates these as being not more than *one* per cent. of the entire New Testament vocabulary.<sup>1</sup>

A special feature of later Greek prominently reflected in the New Testament is the adoption of words and forms from other languages. Several Persian words occur, and also many Latin words, consequent upon the spread of Roman rule. Still more obvious is the presence of Aramaic words<sup>2</sup> in the Greek New Testament. Their adoption indeed was inevitable, for many Christian ideas could not have been expressed by the use of Greek words and phrases in their ordinary connotation. On the other hand, most of these conceptions were already the property of Greek-speaking Jews through the medium of the Septuagint, the renderings of which were thus ready to hand for the expression of Christian thought. In many cases Greek words had undergone a modification or expansion of meaning when religiously applied, and either retained these meanings when adopted by Christian writers or took on a still larger significance. Nay more: the Greek equivalents of Hebrew or Aramaic words were invested with the derived meanings associated with those words.<sup>3</sup> But even where the writer's thoughts could easily have been

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 73, n. 1. Obviously a very large deduction must be made from the list of " Biblical " Greek words appended to Thayer's *Lexicon of the New Testament*.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* korban, rabboni, hallelujah, abba, mammon, talitha-cumi, raka, maranatha.

<sup>3</sup> For examples, see Bleek, *op. cit.* i. p. 73 f.

expressed in ordinary Greek terms and in idiomatic Greek, Jewish-Christian writers frequently resort to a literal translation of Hebrew phrases into Greek, thus forming constructions not in accordance with classical usage, and commonly known as Hebraisms or Aramaisms.<sup>1</sup> These are most numerous in the Apocalypse, and of rarest occurrence in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is written in very fluent and pure Greek, and marks the transition to a new epoch—the literary and theological—in the history of the Christian faith.

That pagan opponents of the new religion should have spoken slightly of New Testament Greek as “a boatman’s idiom” is not perhaps surprising, but the Latin apologists showed misguided judgement when, in contrast to the early Greek apologists who rightly deemed its simple style a merit, they tried to prove that the New Testament was in its external form “artistically perfect.” In allusion to this, Deissmann aptly says: “We for our part are on the side of those who see beauty in the wild rose-bush as well as in the Gloire de Dijon.”<sup>2</sup>

Apart altogether from any question concerning the character of New Testament Greek, it was of inestimable advantage to Christianity that the Gospels were written in the Greek tongue. Not merely was it cosmopolitan; it was also *par excellence* the language of theology. It possessed “an unusual number of terms which express moral, religious, and theological conceptions,”<sup>3</sup> and thus became in the hand of Providence the fitting instrument for conveying to intelligent and re-

<sup>1</sup> For examples, see Bleek, *op. cit.* i. p. 75 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> H. A. A. Kennedy, *Sources of N.T. Greek*, p. 8.

ceptive minds in every nation the truth as it is in Jesus. To realize the extraordinary gain accruing to Christianity from such an unrivalled medium of introduction to the world at large, one has only to imagine what acceptance Buddhism, for example, might have met with had it been put into Greek. As an advertising medium there was at that period nothing comparable to the ubiquitous speech of Hellas, nor was there any other language spoken among men that could approach it in respect of power to give adequate expression to a new creed.

But might not the message of Christianity have been propagated as on the day of Pentecost by means of the gift of tongues? To this it is enough to reply that the miraculous phenomenon of speaking in tongues was evidently never meant to be used as a missionary agency. On the occasion in question St. Peter addressed the multitude—"devout men living at Jerusalem, Jews, out of every nation under heaven"—presumably in Greek, with which they were all acquainted. Although St. Paul possessed this gift, he made no use of it at Malta in order to reach the islanders, but straightway proclaimed the gospel to the governor, who would certainly be familiar with Greek. In 1 Cor. 14<sup>22</sup> he expressly declares that tongues are merely "for a sign" to the unbelieving, and therefore not a medium for spreading the gospel.

*Greek synonymous with a High Intellectual Standard.*

Worthy of note also in this connexion is the fact that as the vehicle of Greek culture the Greek language provided Christianity with a high intellectual standard.



To know Greek was not simply to have acquired a foreign language ; it was to have received an education. It implied the possession of a certain culture which was the recognized basis of intercourse between men of different nationalities. The Hellenist had the key to the treasure-stores of the poets and philosophers whose writings still represent the acme of human genius. Not yet has the world outgrown their methods of thought and argument. Aristotle will hold his own with any logician of to-day, and for sheer intellectual force and dialectic skill where can anything be found to excel or even equal the Pauline Epistles ? The fresh and acute reasoning of the Hebrew scholar, trained possibly in the Hellenistic seminary at Tarsus,<sup>1</sup> is more than a match for the superficial flippancies of some twentieth-century scientists ; and the Greek culture which so thoroughly furnished him as an exponent and defender of the Christian faith has provided it for all time with an intellectual standard so high that it can never be superseded.

<sup>1</sup> See Note II, p. 387.

## CHAPTER V.

### HELLENISM AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THAT pagan morality should in many points coincide with the teaching of the gospel is no argument against the divine origin of Christianity, which is more than a system of ethics. Greek philosophy makes no claim to furnish all that is needful for the highest well-being of man. Socrates looked forward to some "teacher sent from God" who should shed further light than could be obtained from the law written upon the human conscience. Even on its own showing, therefore, heathen philosophy was but obscure and limited as compared with the clear and full-orbed presentation of truth contained in Christian revelation. Not that paganism as represented by Hellenistic philosophy is without its value. In its own measure it bears witness to Christian truth, and the study of it is fitted to remind us that God has spoken to man "at sundry times and in divers manners."

Reference has already been made to the influence upon the New Testament of Alexandrian Judaism. Apart from other and minor traces, this is reflected mainly in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in St. John's Gospel, the one marking the beginning, and the other the riper development, of the Hellenistic theology of primitive Christianity.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews bases his Christian speculation on the central thought underlying the cosmology of Philo, namely, the contrast between the world of ideas and that of sensible copies. Christ is virtually identified with the Platonic Logos. As the mediator of the supersensible and the sensible worlds He is addressed as God (1<sup>8</sup>)—"the first certain trace," according to Pfeiderer, "of the apotheosis of Christ, which we have accordingly to refer to Hellenism."<sup>1</sup> Yet between this Christian Hellenism of the writer to the Hebrews and the Jewish Hellenism of Alexandrian speculation there is a marked divergence. If the exalted conception of the person of Christ as the Eternal Son of God, which finds expression in the Epistle, corresponds to that of the Philonic Logos and heavenly High Priest, the New Testament writer strikes out a path of his own in identifying the Logos with Jesus, the lowly incarnate Saviour of sinners. This identification drives a distinct and abiding wedge between Christian theology and the Jewish philosophy of religion. For the airy abstraction by means of which Philo attempted to bridge the gulf between the two worlds the author of the Epistle substitutes the historical Jesus, thereby removing the opposition and opening the way to true fellowship between God and men. Not only so, but the life of Jesus in the days of His flesh is also invested with pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy and Development of Religion*, ii. p. 237. It is, however, probably more correct to say that He was first designated "the Lord" by St. Paul, who in Rom. 9<sup>5</sup> also calls Him "God"; and that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was influenced by the Apostle. That the use of the terms *θεός* and *Κύριος* was suggested to Paul's mind by their currency in the Hellenistic world there can be little doubt.

found significance as a moral stimulus and example Perfected in the way of obedience and suffering, and raised through His faithfulness to the right hand of the Majesty on high, He has become the pattern for us in running the race set before us.

To some extent at least, as we have already seen, the Johannine Logos is a Hellenistic conception, and the Fourth Gospel is in general much more Hellenistic than the Synoptic Gospels. Its religious view of the world seems based upon that of Philo. In both cases alike the opposition between God and the world is mediated by the Logos. For Philo, however, the Logos is little else than a metaphysical abstraction, whereas with the Evangelist the Logos coincides with the Jesus of history. In Him the heavenly Logos has become flesh. Partaking as He does of the divine nature, His glory is that of the only-begotten of the Father, and His whole life is a revelation of grace and truth. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (1<sup>4</sup>). To see Him is to see the Father. Thus did the Hellenistic theology of the Fourth Gospel, by its assertion of the deity of Christ Jesus, and of His function as "the eternal mediator of all Divine revelation in opposition to the world," furnish a satisfactory answer to the yearning desire of the age for a meeting-point between the divine and the human. Christ, the ideally perfect Man, is also the complete and final revelation of God.

To the Hellenistic mind the Christian doctrine of salvation involved the assumption of the opposition of God and the world. According to John, the world is, through the Logos, God's creation and an object of His redeeming love; but it is also the very antithesis of

God, and stands related to Him as darkness to light, as flesh to spirit, as death to life. The world is represented under the figure of a kingdom which continually opposes itself to the kingdom of Christ. The subjects of this kingdom are in darkness and cannot comprehend the light; in bondage to its prince, and cannot redeem themselves from his tyranny. They are sons of the devil, adherents of a lie, and doomed to destruction. Christ appeared as "the light of the world" (8<sup>12</sup>), "the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4<sup>14</sup>). He has raised His kingdom in the world as an opposing element to the world. The very purpose of His coming was to destroy the works of the devil. As maker of all things, the source of life and the spiritual light of men, the Logos is the inspirer of all historical revelation communicated previous to His incarnation in Christ to a world unconscious of its divine origin and destiny; and with His appearance in human form divine revelation was perfected. By the garment of flesh the glory of the Logos-Christ was at once veiled and manifested—veiled from the bodily sight of men, yet truly manifested in word and deed. His own relation to the Father, a relation of dependence and of essential oneness, becomes the ideal of human sonship and fellowship with God: "As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God" (1<sup>12</sup>). What constitutes reception of Him is faith in His word, recognition of His claim to be Revealer of the Father and Saviour of the world.

The main point of interest for us here is the significance attached by the Johannine theology to the saving efficacy of the *life* of Jesus. St. Paul lays all the

emphasis on His atoning death ; but in John the death of Christ is viewed not as an event standing out by itself in splendid isolation, but as the conclusion and crown of His whole earthly activity. To the mind of the Hellenistic evangelist the Saviour's death presented itself as a voluntary act of self-surrender performed out of love to men in order to rescue them from the evil dominion of the world and Satan its prince. It was like the corn of wheat which is followed by a fruitful harvest. By His acceptance of death upon the cross Jesus revealed His own and the Father's love, overcame the world, laid aside the temporary veil of the flesh, and re-entered upon His heavenly glory. He had power to lay His life down, and power to take it again.

There is also something Hellenistic in the Johannine conception of the origin and character of the faith in Christ. In the Pauline writings Christianity is viewed as a wholly new creation, but in John, although certainly also represented as a new birth (3<sup>8</sup>), it appears rather as the result of the awakening into life, through the revelation of Christ, of powers already latent in the soul. It is the satisfaction of religious longings previously implanted in the hearts of men : " All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," but " No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him " (6<sup>37</sup>, 44). John, moreover, knows nothing of the sharp contrast drawn by Paul between faith and works, for the simple reason that instead of laying stress upon redemption by the death of Christ from the curse of the law he clings to the person of Christ as the revelation of grace and truth. With him faith and love form a species of dissolving view, the one shading into the

other, so that to keep the commandments and to love the brethren essentially belong to faith.

Among other Hellenistic features peculiar to the Fourth Gospel is the way in which the coming of the Holy Spirit, "the Paraclete," the Comforter, the Teacher of the Church, is represented as the direct result of the departure and exaltation of Christ. "It is expedient for you," says Jesus, "that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (16<sup>7</sup>). The designation of the Spirit by the name Paraclete is a decided step in the direction of conceiving the idea of the Spirit as a distinct personality. A further contribution towards the same theological position is the statement that Jesus had been deterred from saying many things to the disciples owing to their inability to understand Him while He was yet with them in the body, but that the Spirit would guide them into all truth (16<sup>12-14</sup>). Through this progressive revelation of the Spirit believers would attain to ever greater heights of spiritual knowledge and religious life.

There is further traceable a decidedly Hellenistic view in the eschatology of St. John's Gospel. Instead of the Synoptic view of the Parousia as the Saviour's coming in power and glory to judge the world, the emphasis is laid upon the knowledge of God and of Christ as being the life eternal. The conception of the Second Advent is more spiritual than that formed by the first generation of Christian disciples. It is viewed as already partially realized in the appearances of Christ after the resurrection, and also as continuously fulfilled in His spiritual coming to His people and His



indwelling by His Spirit in their hearts. There is no longer any thought of the external Chiliastic reign of Christ. As here portrayed, His kingdom is not of this world ; it is composed of those who give to God a spiritual worship, and who like their Master bear witness unto the truth. So also in place of the delineation of the judgement as a great assize there is insistence on the fact of a continual judgement : " He that believeth not is condemned already " (3<sup>18</sup>). Unbelief means exclusion from God. Faith and love, on the other hand, bind us to Him, and to Christ, and to one another ; and the state of heavenly blessedness will consist in the perfect consummation of this holy and happy fellowship. "Hellenistic faith in the other world, that religious expression of the ancient idealism animated by the warm breath of the mysticism of Christian love—this was the sign under which the Church set itself to conquer the world of ancient civilization and culture." <sup>1</sup>

What *other* evidences of Greek influence, it may now be asked, are to be met with in the New Testament ? Perhaps we should reckon as a fruit of the Greek educational spirit the rational restraint shown by the New Testament writers in contrast to the fondness for the marvellous and the occult displayed by non-canonical Christian authors who represent the more oriental aspect of religion in that period ; but this is at most only a generality. Can we point to positive traces of Hellenism ? In the Synoptic Gospels there is little that comes under this category, non-Jewish influence being "discernible merely in certain expressions, metaphors, and com-

<sup>1</sup> Pfeiderer, *op. cit.* ii. p. 256.

parisons" <sup>1</sup> (Matt. 7<sup>13 f., 16</sup>; Mark 2<sup>17</sup>, etc.). The teaching of Jesus was certainly independent of the Greeks. Few traces of Hellenistic influence are to be found in the First Epistle of Peter. The comparison of the word with seed (1<sup>23</sup>) may possibly reflect the Stoic doctrine of the λόγος σπέρματικός, and the list of vices (4<sup>3</sup>), like some of the enumerations in the Pauline Epistles (Gal. 5<sup>19 ff.</sup>; Rom. 1<sup>29 ff.</sup>, 13<sup>13</sup>; Col. 3<sup>5, 8</sup>), may also have been partly suggested by the Stoic philosophy. The term "Shepherd" as applied to Jesus (2<sup>25</sup>, 5<sup>4</sup>), if borrowed from the Hermetic literature, is so merely as a mode of expression. The view that the phrase "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus" (1<sup>2</sup>) arose from the taurobolia (Gunkel, J. Weiss) is no more feasible than that which would derive the idea of Christ's descent into Hades (3<sup>19 f.</sup>) from the visits paid (in their lifetime) by Greek heroes to the infernal regions. In the Second Epistle of Peter, however, there do occur distinct traces of Hellenistic influence. Whether the expression "partakers of the divine nature" (1<sup>4</sup>) has any connexion with the parallel phrase "partakers of human nature" occurring in an extant religious inscription of Antiochus I. seems very doubtful; but Deissmann has shown that 2 Pet. 1<sup>3-11</sup> is so strikingly akin to an inscription dating from the early days of the Empire and containing a decree issued by the citizens of Stratonicea in Caria in honour of Zeus and Hecate, that both the author of the inscription and the writer of our Epistle presumably availed themselves of certain "familiar forms and formulæ of religious emotion." "But even if this be granted" [says Clemen, who prints the two texts side by side], "it would again

<sup>1</sup> Clemen, *Primitive Christianity and its Non-Jewish Sources*, p. 366.

mean only that certain formulæ were employed in a new connexion; it would not follow that there had been a real appropriation of ideas."<sup>1</sup> The second of the two proverbs contained in 2 Pet. 2<sup>22</sup>, "The sow when washed will wallow in the mire," though it no doubt reached the New Testament writer by oral transmission, appears to be a free version of a saying of Heraclitus.<sup>2</sup> In particular the declaration that in the day of judgement the world will be destroyed by fire (3<sup>7</sup>. 10<sup>ff.</sup>) reveals Hellenistic influence. Not that the conception was originally Greek—in reality it emanated from Persia—but it was probably through the medium of the Stoics that it was transmitted to the writer of the Epistle. Little or nothing to the point occurs in the Epistle of Jude.<sup>3</sup> Certain marks of Jewish Hellenism in the Epistle of James have been already noted.<sup>4</sup> Of further Greek influence there is in this Epistle little trace. That the opening words of 1<sup>17</sup> (πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δῶρημα τέλειον) should be in the form of a hexameter may be a mere coincidence, and in no way warrants the supposition that it has been borrowed. On the other hand, the comparison with seed (1<sup>21</sup>) may

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 352.

<sup>2</sup> According to Clemen (p. 50) it probably ran thus *ὅς δὲ ἡδίων βορβόρῳ λούονται ἢ διανγεί* [or *διειδεῖ*] *καὶ καθαρῶ ὕδατι*. This seems the most satisfactory location of the original proverb yet suggested. Another conjectured source is the Story of Aḥīkar, some texts of which contain the following: "My son, thou hast behaved like the swine which *went to the bath* with people of quality, and when he came out, saw a stinking drain, and went and rolled himself in it" (Rendel Harris, *Story of Aḥīkar*, p. lxvii). Bigg is of the opinion that as the first proverb occurs in Prov. 26<sup>11</sup>, the second was probably added by some Jewish paraphrast to the canonical collection of the Proverbs of Solomon.

<sup>3</sup> But see below, p. 289.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 211.

possibly be connected with the philosophical conception of the λόγος σπερματικός; and the question, "Can a fig tree yield olives, or a vine figs?" is more distinctly an echo of Greek than of Hebrew literature.<sup>1</sup> Traces of Hellenistic influence in the Book of Revelation are comparatively slight. Deissmann is perhaps right in deriving the "palms" in 7<sup>9</sup> from Greek ritual; but there is no good reason for connecting the washing of robes in the blood of the Lamb (7<sup>14</sup>) with the blood-baptism of the criobolia, which formed no part of the worship of Cybele till the second century A.D. According to Clemen, the angel of the abyss (9<sup>11</sup>) "may partially be traced to Apollo." The Greek myth concerning Leto's giving birth to this god and being persecuted by a dragon is by some scholars, but with doubtful justification, regarded as the basis of the representation of the sun-woman in Rev. 12 as giving birth to the Messiah and suffering similar persecution. It seems much more likely that the writer's account is coloured by a Jewish tradition which conceived the birth of the Messiah as still in the future. On the other hand, in the names with which the worshippers of the beast are branded on the right hand or on the forehead (13<sup>16f</sup>, 14<sup>9, 11</sup>, 16<sup>2</sup>, 19<sup>30</sup>, 20<sup>4</sup>) there is probably an allusion to the practice of tattooing the body in honour of a god. It is possible that the idea of the moral superiority of celibacy to marriage (14<sup>4</sup>) may to some extent reflect Stoic influence, although it might be sufficiently explained from Judaism. In the seventh angel who pours out his bowl upon the air (16<sup>17</sup>) we may have a reflexion of the Greek belief

<sup>1</sup> Wetstein, *Nov. Test.* i. 343; Klostermann in Lietzmann's *Handbuch*, ii. 1. 209.

in dæmons, but if we are to see foreign influence at work here, it is more probably Persian than Greek. In Rev. 19<sup>13</sup> we meet with the idea of the Logos, which in the Johannine theology, as we have already seen, probably stands in *some* connexion with the doctrine of Philo. Perhaps, however, it is even more closely related to the Hermetic literature, seeing that in the *Poimandres* it is associated with Thot-Hermes, the creative god of the Word (world-reason), just as it is applied to Jesus here and elsewhere in the Johannine writings. In neither case, however, can direct dependence be established; only the fact of affinity can be alleged. The lists of vices in 21<sup>8</sup>, 22<sup>15</sup> are probably traceable in part to similar catalogues occurring in Stoic philosophy, although Deissmann suggests that they are modelled upon the practice of naming sundry vices on the counters used in ancient games. However this may be, the statement of 21<sup>14</sup>: "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" undoubtedly alludes to the pagan custom of engraving an inscription on the foundation-stone. If hostility to the temple be reflected in 21<sup>23</sup> (cf. John 4<sup>24</sup>; Acts 17<sup>24</sup>), it may to some extent have its source in the popular philosophy of the period. Finally, there seems no need to derive the appellation of God and Christ as Alpha and Omega from Hellenistic thought. It is simply the writer's mode of using the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet to mark the foremost and most conspicuous place, and more a peculiarity of style than anything else. There remain the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul. These, it must be said, do bear the stamp of Hellenism other than that

transmitted through Philo. Naturally enough, if as we may perhaps not altogether unreasonably suppose, the chosen interpreter of the Gospel to the Greek world was a man who had received a Greek as well as a Jewish education.<sup>1</sup> At all events, in speaking to Greeks he does not represent Christianity as incompatible with the religious ideas familiar to themselves, but asserts that as a revealed religion it stands in close relation to Greek theology and ethics as taught in their schools and enshrined in their poetry (Acts 17<sup>24 ff.</sup>). The opinion that he seemed to be a setter forth of strange gods may be actually taken from the story of Socrates. In the Pauline Epistles certain traces of Hellenistic life and manners are obviously present; for example, the formation of parties, and the presence of envy and strife in the Corinthian church. These were genuinely Greek products, as was also the restless intellectualism which led St. Paul in his argument to introduce a phrase like that of 1 Cor. 15<sup>35</sup> ("But some one will say"). Such things, however, could have no direct bearing upon the form assumed by Christian theology; they are merely reflexions of the Greek atmosphere. That Hellenism did, however, affect the structure of Christian doctrine as presented in the Pauline writings is beyond doubt. The conceptions taken over from Hellenism may be classified roughly as (1) General, (2) Platonic, (3) Stoic.

Under the first head let it suffice here to refer to St. Paul's teleological view of the world, and to the use of *Kyrios* as a title for Christ already current in his time.

His teleological conception coincides with that of Greek philosophy. Not that this is peculiar to him

<sup>1</sup> See Note 11, p. 387.



among the sacred writers ; it is a fundamental principle of Old Testament theology as well as an article of the Christian creed. But certainly special stress is laid upon it by the Apostle of the Gentiles, for example in Rom. 9<sup>6-29</sup>, where he shows that Israel's rejection is not incompatible either with the divine promises or with the divine justice, and that " the world, not Israel, is the final end of God's action." From the same standpoint he asserts the futility of the means used by the world for arriving at the knowledge of God. The world-wisdom of the Gentiles and the school-wisdom of the Jews had alike failed to secure the desired result ; consequently it was the will of God to effect the salvation of believers through the opposite of wisdom, namely, by means of the apparent foolishness of the doctrine of the Cross. Although in comparison with the wisdom employed by the world as a means of knowledge this is a foolish doctrine, yet in the determinate counsel of God it has become, for them that believe, the means of salvation. Man's reckoning of what is wisdom and what is foolishness is reversed through the alchemy of the divine will, which arranges all things for the securing of special ends. The Apostle thus makes effective use of a tenet of Greek philosophy to subvert a Greek prejudice against the gospel.

The substitution of the title Kyrios or Lord for Messiah as the designation for Christ is most satisfactorily explained as due to the transference of the gospel at an early stage of its history from a Jewish to a Hellenistic environment. Gentile converts recruited from the ranks of " the Lord Serapis " and other patron divinities of the mystery-religions naturally thought of Christ



not in terms of the traditional Messianic conception current among the Jews and reflected in their Apocalyptic literature, but in terms of the conception of deity ruling among the cults which they had abandoned. To them He is not the Messiah reserved in heaven until the last days, but the present God, the true Lord and Saviour as opposed to the "lords many and gods many" who had falsely claimed their homage. Through the influence of Hellenistic religion this new attitude towards the risen and exalted Christ as an object of worship had evidently in St. Paul's time become general in the Church (1 Cor. 8<sup>5f</sup>). It is warrantable to suppose that by his insistence that Jesus Christ is "the Lord" the Apostle meant indirectly to protest against the application of this title to the Roman Emperor. Very pointedly, and with the same design, Jude also refers to Jesus Christ as our sole liege and Lord (4). This theory of the origin of the title Kyrios<sup>1</sup> does not of course exclude its moral significance; rather does it help to emphasize the fact of the empire of Christ over His people's hearts and lives.

Unmistakably Platonic is the distinction of the outward and inward man, of body and soul, of flesh and spirit.<sup>2</sup> Though bound up together, these are viewed as distinct entities, each having a life of its own. The body is the earthly tabernacle of the soul. It is also its moral antithesis: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary, the one to the other" (Gal. 5<sup>17</sup>). As the seat

<sup>1</sup> For a reply to the arguments against this view of the origin of Christ-worship and of the Kyrios title, see Morgan, *The Religion and Theology of Paul*, p. 50 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. 4<sup>16</sup>, 1 Thess. 4<sup>22</sup>, Rom. 8<sup>1</sup> with *Phædrus*, 245a.

of sin, and essentially evil, the flesh is incapable of redemption, and cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15<sup>50</sup>). The task prescribed for the Christian is to mortify its affections and lusts (Col. 3<sup>5</sup>). For the apostle, then, the soul is the inner as contrasted with the outer man, the self as distinguished from its bodily tabernacle; he speaks of it as the mind, the spirit (Rom. 7<sup>23</sup>; 1 Cor. 2<sup>11</sup>; 2 Cor. 7<sup>1</sup>). Now this is practically the Greek conception of the soul as consisting of reason and conscience (Rom. 1<sup>20</sup>, 2<sup>15</sup>), and as akin to the divine law (Rom. 7<sup>15 ff.</sup>). Through the domination of the flesh, however, the soul is in the grasp of evil, and helpless. As carnal and psychic, the natural man is in bondage. "The law is spiritual," says the apostle, "but I am carnal, sold under sin; the good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." He does not, like the Stoic, believe that the mind can subdue the bodily passions; hence his distressful cry, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" There is only one way of deliverance for the soul—the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Such being the apostle's doctrine of flesh and spirit, there can be little hesitation in describing its affinities as Platonic rather than Hebrew. In the Hebraic sources we nowhere find sin regarded as resulting from man's fleshly constitution. The Old Testament, while recognizing the tendency to evil in human nature, does not ascribe this to the flesh. But among Hellenistic cults flesh and spirit were uniformly conceived as opposed to each other, and virtue as consisting in the subjugation of the animal by the intellectual element in man. If on the latter point there is divergence between the

Hellenistic and Pauline positions, this is only with regard to the means by which the end can be attained. In view of the fact that the general theological outlook of the apostle is based upon the Jewish apocalyptic doctrine of the two æons or worlds—this world in bondage to evil and evil spirits with Satan at their head, and doomed to speedy destruction; and the future world “full of glory and immortality” (4 Esd. 4<sup>11</sup>, 7<sup>12</sup><sup>f</sup>, etc.), to be ushered in when the kingdom of Satan, after a final terrific struggle between the powers of good and evil, has been overthrown—a recent author is probably right in saying that “What we have in Paul’s doctrines of the flesh and the spirit is a Hellenistic stratum of thought superimposed on the primitive apocalyptic stratum.”<sup>1</sup>

A characteristic element in St. Paul’s teaching is that concerning a Christian gnosis. In his writings this term, which signifies intelligence or understanding, denotes not only the general knowledge of the Christian religion, but that deeper knowledge of it which is peculiar to the more advanced among its adherents (1 Cor. 2<sup>6</sup><sup>f</sup>, 12<sup>8</sup>, etc.). As used by him the conception has its roots not in Hebrew but in Hellenistic religion. Neither in the prophetic nor in the Wisdom writers of the Old Testament do we find any trace of the mystical element so distinctive of the Pauline gnosis. The Jewish gnostic piety reflected in the writings of Philo was no native product of Hebraism, but a growth due to Oriental influences. From the teaching of Jesus Himself as set forth in the Synoptic Gospels the speculative vein is entirely absent. On the other hand, apart from its

<sup>1</sup> Morgan, *op. cit.* p. 27.

intensely ethical spirit, the Pauline gnosis stands in close relation to that of Platonism and of Hellenistic cults. In both cases alike gnosis is an inner revelation, divinely communicated, and having the effect of introducing the recipient to the higher mysteries. Common to both is the distinction between the elementary knowledge of the novice and the profounder knowledge of the initiated. Both grapple with the problem of redemption from evil, and both contain the idea of intermediary agency—logos or nous, angels or æons—in creation and redemption. Not that the Hellenistic gnosis can be identified or regarded as of equal value with that of St. Paul. "From the gnosis of . . . the pagan the gnosis of Paul, alike by its sobriety, by the worth of its thoughts, by its hold on reality, and by the character of the piety that comes to expression in it, stands wide as the poles asunder."<sup>1</sup> Although the apostle values gnosis so highly as to place it foremost in the category of spiritual gifts, he nowhere represents it either as the actual means or the necessary condition of salvation. So far from this, he asserts that while "knowledge puffeth up, love edifies" (1 Cor. 8<sup>1</sup>); that real knowledge cannot be divorced from love; that in order to become practically wholesome, it must be morally regulated. The attractions of Hellenism notwithstanding, he unhesitatingly yields to the appeal of the ethical ideal of religion propounded in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the teaching of Jesus, with the result that Hellenistic gnosis is made entirely subservient to this, and relegated to the position of a handmaid.

<sup>1</sup> Morgan, *op. cit.* p. 174.

Plato and St. Paul are notably at one in their teaching concerning the nature of reality. According to Plato, there are two sorts of knowledge, and corresponding to these two sorts of being. While by means of the senses we apprehend the constantly shifting phenomena of nature, in thought we are enabled to grasp the eternal realities of which these are but the reflexion. The average man, indeed, is like a chained prisoner in a cave, who perceives only the shadows of what is passing outside, and mistakes these for realities. But not so the emancipated soul, which has entered into the light of the invisible, and is capable of direct contact with reality. What, then, according to Plato, are the ultimate realities? They are the Ideas or perfect forms existing in a higher world of whatever through our senses we become aware of in the material world. All that we perceive in the world of sense is but the faint reflexion or image of a perfect original existing in the world unseen. Thus the perfect chair is not here, but yonder. Our conception of a statesman, of beauty, or courage, or any other virtue, represents only an approximation towards seeing the supersensible reality, namely, the perfect statesman, the perfect beauty, courage, etc., actually existing in the invisible world. The world of Ideas and the world of sense are related as substance to shadow. It is the function of sensible objects to awaken the mind to perceive the Idea, which is the sole reality. It was by means of his theory of Ideas that Plato arrived at the new thought of a spiritual world possessing transcendent worth.<sup>1</sup> In its search

<sup>1</sup> In this, however, he seems to have been anticipated by Buddhism. See above, p. 109.

for truth the soul must concern itself with higher objects than the ever-changing perceptions and impressions of everyday life, and penetrate beyond the dim shadows of the visible to the abiding realities of the unseen. To this ideal world of Plato a striking parallel is afforded by the Pauline doctrine of a heavenly and eternal world in which alone the soul can attain to perfect blessedness. The language used with regard to the necessarily defective knowledge open to sojourners upon earth ("For now we see through a glass darkly," 1 Cor. 13<sup>12</sup>) recalls Plato's famous illustration of the cave. The apostle declares that in our present condition our knowledge comes through an imperfect medium like the dimly reflecting metal mirrors of his time; the Greek philosopher, that what we see around us is but the visible image of invisible reality—moving shadows of the eternal, the perfect, and the true. Both alike represent the things of sense and time as but the shadows of the real and the eternal. With St. Paul Plato might have said: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4<sup>18</sup>). The avowed aim of the Greek philosopher was to win the soul from the life of sense to the contemplation of invisible reality, to lead it from the seen to the unseen, and from the transitory to the eternal, so that we may "set our minds on things immortal and divine." The message of the Christian apostle is substantially the same. In almost identical terms he says: "Seek the things which are above. . . . Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are upon the earth" (Col. 3<sup>1-2</sup>). Other

points of contact between Platonic and Pauline teaching might be adduced,<sup>1</sup> but enough has been said to show that there is at least a "real kinship of thought" between Plato and St. Paul.

St. Paul's acquaintance with Stoicism cannot reasonably be called in question. The phraseology as well as the main dogmas of that Hellenistic school were probably familiar to him. In his speech on the Areopagus he quotes from the Cicilian Aratus, or the Stoic Cleanthes—Greek poets belonging to the same school as his hearers—and singles out what is perhaps the finest devotional gem in Greek literature: "We too are thine offspring."<sup>2</sup> And in his Epistles there occur numerous and striking linguistic parallels with the writings of the contemporary Stoic philosopher Seneca. For example, Seneca says, "Good men toil, they spend and are spent" (cf. 2 Cor. 12<sup>15</sup>); "The evil man turns all things to evil" (cf. Tit. 1<sup>15</sup>); "Gather up and preserve the time" (cf. Eph. 5<sup>16</sup>); "I reflect how many exercise their bodies, how few their minds" (cf. 1 Tim. 4<sup>3</sup>); "They live ill who are always learning to live" (cf. 2 Tim. 3<sup>7</sup>). Yet it would be rash to conclude that these verbal resemblances imply direct obligation on the one side or on the other, for the simple reason that we cannot always tell which of the two

<sup>1</sup> For further details on this subject see Professor E. J. Price's interesting article on "Paul and Plato" in the *Hibbert Journal* for January 1918.

<sup>2</sup> The significance of this must not, however, be exaggerated. It certainly does not prove on the part of the apostle any extensive knowledge of Greek literature. There is force in the observation of Professor Price that "the two or three quotations from classical writers which diligent search discovers in the letters and speeches of Paul may after all be mere tags of the market-place with which the man in the street is familiar without knowing anything at all of their origin."



writings concerned is the earlier in point of date. Even more impressive is the doctrinal affinity between the words of St. Paul and the teaching of the Stoics. The writer of Acts, in reporting his address to the Athenians, represents him as putting forward the usual Stoic argument from natural religion (17<sup>23</sup>).<sup>1</sup> In declaring that God cannot be satisfied with mere external worship he is at one with Seneca, who says, "The whole world is the temple of the immortal gods";<sup>2</sup> "Temples are not to be built to God of stones piled on high. He must be consecrated in the heart of each man";<sup>3</sup> "God is near thee: He is within";<sup>4</sup> and in his assertion that the human race is a unity, that all are of one blood, governed by the same Providence, created capable of knowing God, and therefore blameworthy for sinking into idolatry, he is, as he himself indicates, quite in line with their own creed (Acts 17<sup>24-29</sup>). Although the polemic against idolatry in Rom. 1<sup>23, 25</sup> is primarily based on the Book of Wisdom (13-15), and also on the Old Testament (Isa. 40<sup>18, 25 f.</sup>), it is in part also an echo of Greek popular philosophy. The apostle further agrees with the Stoics in his estimate of the worth of the individual. As drawn by Cicero and by Seneca, the portrait of the ideal wise man represents him as raised above the need of anything. He is more truly a king than any reigning monarch; fair within, and therefore more beautiful than the merely outwardly fair; endowed with riches far surpassing material wealth; free, even in bonds, because emancipated in spirit. On this, in a notable

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also the speech at Lystra (Acts 14<sup>15-17</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> *de Benef.* vii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Fragm.* 123 in Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* vi. 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep. Mor.* xli. 1.

passage, St. Paul seems to base his glowing description of the Christian life in its entirety, active and passive : . . . "as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."<sup>1</sup> It is a moot point whether the Pauline doctrine of predestination, or at any rate the form in which it has been presented by sundry Christian theologians, is not "tinged with the fatalism of the Stoical philosophy." In the opinion of one writer, "St. Paul, being bred a Pharisee, spake there (in Rom. 9), and is to be interpreted according to the doctrine of the Pharisees concerning fate, which they had borrowed from the Stoics."<sup>2</sup> In the Pauline phrase "body, soul, and spirit" we have a further instance of the manner in which the apostle borrows from the current phraseology of the Stoics, while at the same time adapting their language to the Christian idea. For while the Stoics designate the constituent elements of human nature as "body, soul, and mind" (*Marc. Aurel.* iii. 16), St. Paul introduces an important modification, substituting "spirit" (πνεῦμα) for "mind" (νοῦς), and including mind under "soul" (ψυχή). His contention is that not the natural, nor the merely intellectual or soulish man, but only the spiritual man, can "receive the things of the Spirit of God." It is the spirit that is the meeting-point between God and man. Not that the other elements in human nature, body and soul, do not fall within the scope of divine redemption; they

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. 6<sup>9</sup> f.

<sup>2</sup> Dodwell, Proleg. ad J. Stearn, *de Obstin.* sect. 41, p. 147.

too must be sanctified. Christ claims empire over our entire nature—our bodies and our minds as well as our spirits. St. Paul gives no countenance to the view of Greek philosophy that matter is essentially evil, a view which lay at the root of that libertinism on the part of the Corinthians which assumed that sins of the flesh do not affect the immortal spirit. Another point of contact between Stoicism and Pauline Christianity is found in the emphasis laid by both upon the active life. In the East it was common to conceive of human virtue as consisting simply in contemplation and passive resignation; but the Stoic ideal was that of an active piety in which purity of life was combined with positive well-doing. This is also the note struck by the apostle of the Gentiles, whose rule for Christians is: "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Rom. 12<sup>11</sup>). For him and for the first disciples generally this activity was primarily of a missionary character, and every Christian, whatever his human calling, is bound to work for the advancement of the kingdom of God. The spirit of self-sacrificing devotion must also express itself, however, in philanthropic service to individual men after the pattern of Christ's own ministering love. A remarkable correspondence between Stoicism and the teaching of St. Paul lies also in the practical adoption by the apostle of the doctrine of the worthlessness of mere sporadic acts of goodness apart from an inward radical regeneration affecting the entire life. The stress laid by the Stoics upon inwardness is retained in Christianity. Equally with the Stoic philosopher, the apostle insists upon the soul being made right before the life can become right. According to the Stoic the

fool can do no good, and the sage can do no wrong ; according to St. Paul a man must be " justified by faith " before he can attain to virtue. What both alike attach importance to is not the outward act, but the animating motive. In all this we can discern a decided affinity between the Protestant of to-day and the Stoic of two thousand years ago.<sup>1</sup> Again it is highly probable that the tendency to make a display of asceticism shown by early Christianity is partly traceable to Stoic influences. Thus, for example, with 1 Cor. 7<sup>29, 35</sup>: " The interval has been shortened : so let those that have wives live as if they had none . . . that ye may devote yourselves to the service of the Lord without distraction," we may compare a parallel passage of Epictetus (*Diss.* iii. 22) : " In the present state of things which is like that of an army placed in battle order, is it not fit that the Cynic should without any distraction be employed only on the service of God ? " Although Epictetus and Paul did not hold identical views about marriage, it is remarkable that both should not only press the same argument and to the same purpose, but that they should even use the same word (*ἀπερίσπαστος*, or the corresponding adverb). Still another illustration of Stoic influence occurs in the Pauline conception of a heavenly commonwealth. The Greeks, we know, had formed the ideal of a world-embracing kingdom. " The world is my country,"<sup>2</sup> says Seneca ; and again, " Wherever a *man* is, there is room for doing good."<sup>3</sup> These ideas

<sup>1</sup> " We can trace it historically, with but few gaps in the obscurity of the Middle Ages, from the rugged mountains of Cilicia, the original home of Stoicism, to the equally rugged land of the Scotch Covenanters."—Mahaffy, *Alexander's Empire*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *de vit. beat.* 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 24.

are appropriated by the apostle, and given a nobler content. "Our citizenship," he says, "is in heaven" (Phil. 3<sup>20</sup>). "Therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints" (Eph. 2<sup>19</sup>). "There is no room for Jew or Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3<sup>28</sup>; cf. Col. 3<sup>11</sup>). Thus "a living soul has been breathed into the marble statue by Christianity."<sup>1</sup>

The remark just quoted furnishes us with the key to the true explanation of these resemblances between the language of the Stoics and that of St. Paul. They have led some to entertain the erroneous opinion that Seneca was a Christian, and a spurious correspondence between the apostle and the heathen philosopher was (probably about the fourth century) forged in support of this view. In point of fact, Seneca was an uncompromising Stoic. This, however, did not hinder him as a man of wide culture from gathering fruit from every school of thought existing in his time, and in this way he may possibly have acquired a certain knowledge of Christianity. The verbal similarity so frequently traceable in the language of the two writers is due to the fact that in the moral vocabulary of the Stoics St. Paul found ready to hand terms admirably fitted to express various phases of the Christian life, and that he did not hesitate to make use of them, any more than St. John did in appropriating the term *Logos* as the most convenient expression of his conception of the person of Christ. But for the Stoic and the Christian the same language did not necessarily convey the same meaning. To the Christian,

<sup>1</sup> Lightfoot on *Philippians*, p. 306.

God, as a personal Being and as a Father, is more than the world ; sin is more than mere error ; and regulating the passions differs from merely crushing them. In Stoicism as represented by Seneca " God is Nature, is Fate, is Fortune, is the Universe, is the all-pervading Mind " ; and although in some sense the Christian might assent to such a statement, it is quite clear that for the Stoic philosopher it held implications directly contrary to those of Christianity. With him, for example, the wise man is not the worshipper or servant of God, but His *equal*, differing from Him in nothing but time. Prayer thus becomes superfluous, seeing that there is no need to plead for what lies within one's own power. While, therefore, justice seems best done to the facts by the view that the moral language of Stoicism, so widely current at the dawn of the Christian era, was freely adopted by the earliest Christian writers, and especially by St. Paul, the circumstances of whose upbringing rendered him exceptionally familiar with the phraseology of this school, it has at the same time to be recognized that as used by him many of these Stoic expressions took on a new and a higher significance.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN ITS RELATION TO HELLENISM.

RIGHTLY to understand the relation of Christianity to Hellenism it is essential to realize that it is not simple and uniform, but diverse and complex, or at all events twofold. On the one hand, it is a relation of direct *antagonism*. From this standpoint Christianity viewed the Hellenistic religions as rank heathenism, and as such not only worthless but pernicious. This aspect of the case finds typical illustration in the legend which tells of the death as a Christian martyr of Cyprian, erstwhile a pagan philosopher and magician, who, finding that the spirits he commanded quailed before the power of the cross, embraced the Christian faith. Although unhistorical, the tale throws light upon the estimate formed of the absolute opposition, even to the point of a life-and-death struggle, between Christianity and paganism. It was as if there had been kindled a fire of red and of white flame, the two flames for ever hostile, and seeking each to burn the other out. On the other hand, at a comparatively early date, Christian writers are found affirming the relationship between Christianity and Hellenistic wisdom to be one of *affinity*. This was the attitude of most of the Greek Apologists of the second



century. According to them, the germs of the truth which came to full maturity in Christianity were already contained in Greek philosophy. This notion, according to which the nobler spirits of the pagan world were virtually regarded as Christians before Christ, and all that was good in pre-Christian thought and life was linked on to Christianity, was afterwards more fully developed by the Christian Platonists of Alexandria. It is also worthy of note that Eusebius of Cæsarea (†338), in his *Præparatio Evangelica*, is at pains to form a collection of pagan anticipations of Christianity, and that Basil the Great (c. 329–379) earnestly commends the study of Greek literature to the Christian youth of his time. Obviously the underlying assumption is that Hellenistic culture, as summed up in the honoured name “philosophy,” paved the way for the truths of divine revelation. Philosophy was represented as the handmaid of theology, and from this it was an easy step to claim for it spiritual equality of rank. “So then” [writes Clement of Alexandria, with all the zest of one rejoicing in a happy discovery], “the barbarian and Hellenic philosophy has torn off a fragment of eternal truth not from the mythology of Dionysos, but from the theology of the ever-living Word.”<sup>1</sup>

This duality of relationship between Hellenism and Christianity is one of the most marked features in the religious thought of the early Christian centuries, and is more or less clearly reflected in the writings alike of the Gnostics and the Apologists, of the Neoplatonists and the Christian Platonists of Alexandria. In Christian compositions Hellenism is now banned, now blessed ;

<sup>1</sup> *Strom.* i. 13.

in Hellenistic treatises Christianity is at times strenuously opposed, at other times its ideas and doctrines meet with at least partial acceptance. Unfortunately, what thus inevitably proved a fruitful source of embarrassment to the ancient Church is scarcely less so to the modern student, who in his efforts to clear up the marches between Hellenism and Christianity is apt to find himself on shifting sand rather than on stable ground.

### *The Gnostics.*

Among the more important forms of speculation evolved from the eclecticism of the age, and one which, particularly with respect to the separation of God and the world, and the necessity of mediating powers in creation, had its roots in the theosophy of Philo, was that of Gnosticism. By this motley cult Indian pantheism, Persian and Greek dualism, and the Christian idea of redemption were severally appropriated and adapted with a view to the solution of the problem of good and evil. If not as a distinct system, yet as a tendency, this "philosophy falsely so called" already in the apostolic age began to assert itself by denying the Incarnation (1 John 4<sup>3</sup>), and by reducing certain Christian doctrines—for example, that of the resurrection (2 Tim. 2<sup>18</sup>)—to a purely ideal significance. It subsequently developed into a strange jumble of heterogeneous elements, in which Christian ideas were combined with Greek and Oriental theosophy. To the instrumentality of Æons emanating from the hidden God it ascribed the creation, development, and redemption of the world. It asserted a dualistic opposition between God and matter; that is to say, its view of the world was Hellen-

istic, not Christian. But while its theory of the universe was derived from paganism, the idea of salvation was borrowed from Christianity. Not indeed in its purity, for Gnosticism, in accordance with its view of matter as inherently evil, taught that by means of knowledge (*γνῶσις*) and asceticism men might overcome matter, purify their souls, and attain to salvation. Yet in respect of the felt need of redemption its attitude was Christian, not Hellenistic. Thus readily did this school of thought, which subordinated the sacred Scriptures to the traditional views of ancient sages, assimilate ideas gathered from opposing systems. Only one result could follow from such assimilation—a certain confusion of the mutual relations subsisting between those systems. It became ever more difficult to define either Hellenism or Christianity.

Gnosticism first assumed distinct shape in the early part of the second century A.D. Three leading schools of Gnostics are perhaps distinguishable—those of Syria, Egypt, and Asia Minor.<sup>1</sup> The Syrian school was founded at Antioch by Menander, and numbered amongst its adherents Tatian (afterwards a convert to Christianity) and Bardesanes, the first hymn-writer of the Syrian Church. The characteristic feature of this school is the prominence which it gives to Zoroastrian elements. It represents the powers of good and evil as in sharp collision, the Supreme God and the Demiurge as waging a ceaseless conflict. Much more influential was the Alexandrian school, represented by Basilides, Valentinus, etc. Basilides (c. 140) did not hold the emanation theory, but attributed every development of God and of the

<sup>1</sup> See Note 12, p. 389.

world to an influence working from beneath upwards. By entirely separating "the non-existent God" from His attributes he carried the analysis of Philo to completion. In speculative power and depth all the Gnostics were surpassed by Valentinus (c. 150), whose mode of thought is distinctly Hellenistic. Peculiar to him is the idea that the *Æons* emanated from the primal essence in complementary pairs, masculine and feminine, and that by their mutual interaction the development of the world proceeds. Valentinus spent his closing years at Rome, and gathered many adherents. Still another phase of Gnosticism is associated with the celebrated Marcion of Pontus. He maintained that in addition to the good and the evil God there is also a third, namely, the *just* God, the Creator or Demiurge. Paganism being subject to the evil, and Judaism to the just God, men were provided with the means of deliverance from the dominion of both of these deities through the free grace of the good God in sending His Logos into the world with an apparent body. Marcion regarded Paul as the only authoritative apostle, and the New Testament as inconsistent with the Old, which proceeded from the Demiurge.

Certain ideas are common to every form of this type of "Hellenistic Theology." There was uniform assertion of the evil of the material world as evanescent, connected with sensual enjoyment, and under the malignant influence of the stars. At the same time it was held that somehow a divine element had mingled with the material cosmos to which it was wholly alien, and that by some means or other it could free itself from its thrall. The Gnostics are mostly Docetic, and

disposed to resolve the real into the merely apparent ; all regard history as simply a parabolic expression of the ideal ; all agree that the world proceeded only mediately from the Supreme Being by emanation in a succession of potencies (δύναμεις) ; and all occupy themselves with the great problem of good and evil. Where the cleavage comes in between the different schools is in making the transition from the spiritual to the material. According to the Alexandrians, the chasm between the Source of all and the lowest darkness is traversed by a many-stepped stair of degeneracy ; according to the Syrians, the existence of the present world is due to the positive invasion of the kingdom of light by the kingdom of darkness.

From the metaphysical standpoint Gnosticism is a hopeless maze ; what gives real interest to it is its moral aim as an earnest effort to grapple with the mystery of pain and evil. The view taken by the Gnostics of Christ and of salvation is no more a fixed quantity than their wild cosmological speculations. But in all their systems Christ is represented as a higher Æon descending to this world with a redemptive purpose.<sup>1</sup> For the Gnostic the idea of redemption does not, however, connote precisely what it does for the Christian. The Christ is presented as a Revealer of mysteries rather than as a Saviour. Through His communication of *gnosis* it becomes possible for the soul to rise to its true

<sup>1</sup> There is no warrant for the assertion that the Christian conception of the Redeemer was borrowed from Hellenistic theology. Neither in the Hermetic literature nor in the teaching of Posidonius is there any mention of a Redeemer. On the other hand, everything points to the Gnostics having taken over this element of the Christian belief into their own systems.

sphere in the realm of light. Christ's triumph over the powers of darkness, besides being the actual realization of the soul's ideal, has the magical effect of opening the prison doors to the fallen divinity in man. Moreover, the idea of suffering on the part of a Divine Being is strongly repudiated. In accordance with Hellenistic prepossessions, it was considered impossible that the heavenly Christ could suffer. He descended not in order to die, but in order to reascend, and in His reascension to release the imprisoned divine element in man.<sup>1</sup> So far as the Gnostics accepted the creed of the Christian Church, they looked upon it as fitted merely for the populace, and counted their own gnosis, which was reserved for the initiated, as infinitely superior. In view of the fact that Gnosticism prepared the way for the Gospel by undermining the older beliefs, forced the Church to consider the deep problems with which it dealt so extravagantly itself, and made the Christian leaders realize that their reliance must be upon reason rather than authority, it is not surprising that the Gnostics should have left their mark on Catholic theology. They have often indeed been designated the first Christian theologians, but perhaps "we may call them rather the first Freemasons."

### *The Apologists.*

The double relationship between Hellenism and Christianity finds illustration also in the writings of the

<sup>1</sup> From the standpoint of the Gnostics generally, the man Jesus was only a semblance of the real heavenly Christ, and his sufferings no more of a reality than anything else pertaining to his visible life. Those who did not take the Docetic view resolved the Christ and the man Jesus who died upon the Cross into two distinct persons.



Greek Apologists.<sup>1</sup> The aim of the Apologists was to defend the Christian religion as a theistic and moral conception of the world based upon revelation. Viewing the Old Testament as the source of dogma, and holding the doctrine of human freedom and responsibility, they were strenuously opposed to Gnosticism. The radical difference between the Apologetic and Gnostic philosophers appeared in their respective treatment of Holy Scripture and of Christian tradition. The former were content to know that they had here a revelation which could satisfy men's minds and make them lead a good life; whereas the latter critically examined the Old Testament to see how far it coincided with gospel teaching. Regarding Christianity as the absolute religion, the Gnostics set themselves to incorporate with it whatever commended itself to them as good, and to rid it of association with whatever they judged to be inferior. The Apologists, on the other hand, were above all desirous to see the Christian tradition established as the ultimate authority in the sphere of religion and morals. But while the Apologists were opposed to Gnosticism, they nevertheless allied themselves to Greek philosophy. This enabled them to explain Christianity to the educated, and to formulate the truth of the gospel in such a way as to commend it to thoughtful men everywhere. They presented it as the rational religion, which has its source in the one God, who is a Spirit; as the religion of liberty and true morality; as a spiritual religion which dispenses with the display of outward ceremonial; and

<sup>1</sup> In what follows I have made partial use of my article on "The Greek Apologists of the Second Century," in the *Biblical World*, vol. xxvi. No. 2, August 1905.



finally as a religion founded on the impregnable rock of revelation. They boldly declared Christianity to be the divinely attested embodiment of the highest truth, as that had already commended itself to men's minds, and in doing so dealt the death-blow to polytheism and all its works, without raising any question concerning the historical traditions of the pagan world. By the help of Christianity, which used it as a weapon in its own interests, Greek philosophy was now to burst the fetters of its "polytheistic past," and, abandoning the proud pedestal on which it stood as the monopoly of the learned, was to enter on a new career of service to a wider circle of humanity.

During the second century Christianity underwent practically the same treatment as Judaism had done at the hands of the Jewish-Alexandrian philosophers, and especially of Philo. These Jewish Hellenists had interpreted the religion of Jehovah to the Greeks as the highest philosophy; and now the Apologists similarly made "the marvellous attempt to present Christianity to the world as the religion which is the true philosophy, and as the philosophy which is the true religion."<sup>1</sup> This process was rendered easier from the circumstance that the Stoic philosophy was itself gradually becoming a religion through its quest for a dogmatic position which should serve as a working principle both of religion and of morals. Christianity seemed to offer precisely the certainty for which philosophers longed, and to it they accordingly turned. While in the hands of the Gnostic minority Christianity was converted into a Hellenistic religion for the cultured few, the Church

<sup>1</sup> Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, ii. p. 177 (Eng. trans.).

generally valued above all else that absolute morality by the identification of which with the Christian faith the Apologists sought to undermine polytheism. Even among the latter, however, Platonic influences were also at work, and although in the philosophy of the age the rationalistic and moral element predominated over the mystic and religious, Neoplatonism was already beginning to emphasize the thought of redemption and the necessity for a higher truth than the merely moral, in order to the removal of antagonisms insoluble by reason itself.

It is impossible to treat here of all the Apologists: Justin and Tatian may be selected as typical representatives. In the writings of the one we have an illustration of the tendency to claim affinity between Christianity and Hellenistic philosophy; in those of the other an instance of the tendency to view them as utterly antagonistic.

Among the Apologists of the second century whose works have been preserved, the foremost place undoubtedly belongs to *Justin Martyr*, a native of Flavia Neapolis (the modern Nablûs) in Palestine, and apparently of Roman descent. Devoting himself to the study of philosophy, he sought guidance in succession from the Stoics, the Peripatetics, and Pythagoreans, but with no satisfactory result. At length he became an ardent disciple of Plato. "The contemplation of ideas," he says, "furnished my mind with wings."<sup>1</sup> While he was thus in love with the Platonic philosophy, the fearlessness of death manifested by the Christians, and the study of the prophetic writings, recommended to him

<sup>1</sup> *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, chap. ii.

by a venerable stranger whom he met by the seashore, attracted him to Christianity. His Platonism, however, coloured his thinking to the last. Even after his conversion he continued to wear the philosopher's cloak (*pallium*), presumably with the view of winning men of culture for the gospel. In various parts of the world he preached salvation through the Christ of God as the only safe and salutary philosophy. At Ephesus he held his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, and in Rome his zeal for Christianity provoked such hostility in philosophical circles that Crescens the Cynic, whom he had openly worsted in argument, plotted his destruction. He seems to have suffered martyrdom in the year 166, during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, his last words being: "I am too little to say anything great of Christ."

Among the certainly genuine works of Justin which have come down to us are his two *Apologies*, of which the *Second* is perhaps only a part of (or appendix to) the first.<sup>1</sup> These writings are characterized by fearless advocacy of the claims of Christians to just and rational treatment at the hands of their rulers, and throw valuable light upon the relations subsisting in Justin's day between the Christian and heathen worlds. Although Justin had a scholarly acquaintance with biblical as well as classical literature, he was no systematic theologian. The day of dogmatic precision and accurate definition was not yet. What is reflected in his writings is the simple faith of those early days, which, without drawing any formal distinction between the two natures, believes Jesus to be very God and very man. In his *Apologies*

<sup>1</sup> In this case we must regard the *Second Apology* mentioned by Eusebius as lost.

there is a frank acceptance of the central truths of Christianity. There is but one God, unchangeable and eternal (i. 13), having ineffable glory and form (i. 9), the Creator (i. 7), Lord and Father of all (i. 32), who cares for His creatures and of His goodness acts out of regard for men (i. 10, 28). Jesus Christ was the Son of God, became man, was crucified, died, rose again, and ascended into heaven (i. 21, 42). While not attempting to expound the significance of the Incarnation, Justin introduces the Platonic idea of the Logos in such a way as to suggest an explanation (i. 5, 46). According to his conception, the Logos is a divine person, through whom God created and arranged all things (ii. 6). The Logos, moreover, was the inspirer of heathen sage as well as of Hebrew prophet. "On account of the seed of reason implanted by nature in every race of men" (ii. 8), Heraclitus, Socrates, etc., although not enjoying "the knowledge and contemplation of the whole word which is Christ," nevertheless lived in the *partial* enjoyment of the Word diffused among men. Philosophers, poets, and historians "each spoke well in proportion to the share he had of the spermatic word" (ii. 13). This idea of the higher life in man being the seed of reason or the germ of the Word is the most striking and original in Justin's writings. "Reason," which through Socrates had condemned superstition among the Greeks, took bodily shape in the Socrates of the barbarians, "the teacher Christ" (i. 4). While no speculative proof can be given of this statement, it is amply confirmed by the witness of prophecy. Christ is not, however, like Socrates, the mere instrument of "reason," but the power of the ineffable Father; and His disciples, unlike

those of the philosophers, are raised above the fear of death (ii. 10, 11). The reason which created and arranged the world became incarnate in order to draw all men to itself, and its doctrines may be apprehended and put to the proof by learned and unlearned alike. The relation of philosophy to Christianity is thus, according to Justin, neither one of identity, nor one of contrast ; it is that of an instalment to the whole. In this way he emphasizes the superiority of Christianity. While the moving impulse of every manifestation of the reasonable has been the divine reason, yet, apart from revelation, none can ever know the whole truth, or attain to certainty, or throw off the yoke of the dæmons. Before the teaching of the prophets, confirmed by Christ and accessible to all, mere human philosophy must vanish as the stars before the rising sun.

The next Christian Apologist was *Tatian*. Although an Assyrian by birth, he was well versed in Greek literature, and followed the profession of a travelling "sophist" or rhetorician. Dissatisfied with what he saw of the pagan philosophies and religions, and with the hollow insincerity, vain pretensions, and grovelling aims of their adherents, he was yearning for some loftier ideal of life and conduct when, as it chanced, he fell in with the Old Testament. The perusal of the Scriptures, their monotheistic doctrine, and the daily life of Christians as witnessed by him in Rome, led him to reject the Greek in favour of the "barbarian" philosophy. His chief concern is rather to exhibit Christianity as truth opposed to error than to secure fairer treatment for Christians.

In his *Address to the Greeks*, written after his con-

version about the middle of the second century, Tatian uses all the resources of Greek rhetoric to brand Greek philosophy in general as a mass of soul-destroying doctrines, and to exalt Christianity as the essence of heavenly wisdom; while at the same time he shows his contempt for Greek tastes by deliberately transgressing the most ordinary canons of style. In no other polemical treatise of the second century is there such a frank repudiation of Hellenistic culture and usages, which are alleged to have been mostly borrowed from the despised barbarians (i. 2). Tatian was especially attracted by two things in Christianity—its clear testimony to the one God as opposed to polytheism, and its precepts with regard to the renunciation of the world. Yet, in spite of his critical attitude towards philosophy, and his advocacy of the religion of revelation as the one source of truth, he remained unconsciously a Platonic thinker. He dwells much on the doctrine of the Logos, and views Christianity as “the philosophy in which, by virtue of the doctrine of the Logos revelation through the prophets, the rational knowledge that leads to life is restored.”<sup>1</sup> No radical distinction, apparently, is made between prophetic revelation and revelation through Christ. To Tatian the truth of Christianity is proved by its antiquity, as well as by the intelligibility of its contents. Greek philosophy he declares to be a plagiarized distortion of Moses and the prophets (xl.), and no more to be esteemed than the absurd mythological fables which disgraced the name of religion.

<sup>1</sup> This is Harnack's generalization from data furnished by the *Oratio ad Græcos*. See *Hist. of Dogma*, ii. p. 192.

The *Address* of Tatian was probably written in Greece, but the author again found his way to Rome, where he formed an acquaintance with Justin, whose disciple he became, and whom he greatly revered. His own activity as a teacher was not, however, relaxed, and Rhodon, the controversial writer who afterward opposed Marcion, was his pupil. After Justin's death, perhaps for lack of his restraining influence, Tatian's Oriental sympathies led to the severance of his connexion with the Catholic Church. He adopted views of a gnostic type, and disseminated them both orally and by his writings. This roused the suspicion and antagonism of orthodox Christians, and in the year 172 they ceased to have fellowship with him. He connected himself with the ascetic sect of the Encratites, and as one reputed to combine the heresies of Marcion and Valentinus, he soon became a target for Christian writers generally.

Without pausing to discuss other Greek Apologists of the period, let it suffice here to state the main drift of their teaching regarding the relation of Christianity to philosophy—theologically the first bone of contention in the ancient Church. They held (1) that the truth is unascertainable by the unaided efforts of philosophers; (2) that whatever fragmentary notions of truth there may be in philosophy are embraced and completed in Christianity, which is divine wisdom revealed of old by the prophets and summarized in Christ; (3) that such revelation of the rational and moral is necessitated by man's subjection to the dæmons; (4) that Christian truth approves itself by its intelligibility to all, and by its power to lift men up to a holy life. They claimed



for Christianity everything true and good, as well as a priority in point of origin over all human systems; and in their writings, through the union of religion with intellectual culture, it "served itself heir to antiquity."

As the name indicates, the writings of the Apologists were essentially apologetic rather than theological. They merely mapped out the field of "dogmatic" in which others were to labour. Christianity as revealed philosophy, the truth of which is guaranteed by Christ, consists, according to the Apologists, of three doctrines: (1) There is one God, who is the Father and Lord of the world. (2) In His goodness God delivers man from the dæmons. (3) God will judge the world, and will punish the wicked with death and reward the good with immortality. The most noticeable feature in this short creed is its failure to apprehend the importance of Christ as Redeemer. Justin, indeed, conceives Him as now reigning in glory and as the future Judge, and identifies Him with the Son of God, but even he does not seem to perceive in the incarnation of the Logos the real basis of the immortality bestowed upon mortals, being content to regard it as the necessary consequence of knowledge and virtue.

### *The Neoplatonists.*

In connexion with Neoplatonism also there is convincing evidence of the twofold relation subsisting between Christianity and Hellenism. The first stage in the development of this system has been already touched on.<sup>1</sup> In passing to the second stage we meet

<sup>1</sup> See p. 198 ff.

with a sensible decline both in doctrine and in practice. The school of Jamblichus († 333) busied themselves not as seekers after wisdom, but as astrologers, interpreters of dreams, and apologists for magic, theurgy, and superstition—practices which Porphyry himself, however, appears to have detested. But they were the natural result of the system. In order to raise himself to the divine, a man must be able to do something corresponding to such elevation, something above the reach of the uninitiated mob. Their efforts shared the fate of every system of thought which attempts to divorce the moral from the spiritual. The last stage of the Neoplatonic philosophy is that to which we are introduced in the writings of Proclus († 485) its “great scholastic.” He abandoned the method of Jamblichus for the speculative process of Plotinus, but modified in several respects the scheme of that philosopher. He was more of a commentator than a thinker. In the year 529, scarcely half a century after the death of Proclus, Justinian by royal edict closed the school of Athens, and Neoplatonism as an independent philosophy became extinct.

As a “mood” of mind Neoplatonism has not been without significance in the world’s history. By its cultivation of astrology and magic it fostered the habit of observing nature, and so gave an impetus to natural science. Its religious mysticism was also the well from which in the period of the Renaissance water enough was drawn to drown a formal, dogmatic rationalism which paid no heed to experience. But what mainly concerns us here, of course, is the relation of Neoplatonism to Christianity. It is difficult to state this with clearness, for the relationship was a complicated one, and

the term Neoplatonism has been understood sometimes in a wider and sometimes in a narrower sense. It is, however, certain (1) that Neoplatonism was in some respects a preparation for Christianity, and to this extent the relationship was one of affinity; (2) that Neoplatonism was at the same time opposed to Christianity, so that the relationship was also one of contrast and hostility.

At this epoch there was a strange confusion in the intellectual and religious world. Christianity was making its influence felt as a religion, not as a philosophy; Hellenism, again, had still considerable power as a philosophy, but little as a religion. Christians could better want a philosophy than the philosophers a religion, yet they showed if anything a stronger desire to make Christianity philosophical than pagan philosophers showed for a satisfying religion; but in reality their systems encroached on each other till many found themselves neither plain Christians nor out-and-out philosophers. Still the tide of Christianity rose higher and higher; it was largely owing to it that the ancient religion was gradually breaking down; and the Neoplatonists, in their intended antagonism performed, amid much to the contrary no doubt, a service to the Christian faith by opening up a way for its reception. There *were* in their philosophy elements akin to Christianity. Its idealism drew men to the contemplation of Christian ideas, as in the case of Augustine;<sup>1</sup> and though the doctrines of Christianity were eminently practical, and those of Neoplatonism speculative, the ideas of the one were in many respects similar to those

<sup>1</sup> *Confessions*, vii. 18-21.

of the other. The Neoplatonists were used to the doctrine of a Trinity, which in its own way their philosophy taught. They were also familiar with the idea of redemption, and shared with Christians the desire to overcome the sensuous, as well as the conviction that only by divine help and revelation can man attain to blessedness and certainty as regards the truth. However great the actual difference between the significance and worth of the cognate doctrines as held in the two systems, the *ideas* were parallel, and if a complete change of substance was needed in order to a transition from Platonism to Christianity, the form remained to some extent identical. Helped by this preparation, many who once regarded Christianity as merely one of the manifestations of the divine Essence came to be otherwise minded when on the one hand they studied the Scriptures and witnessed the Christian worship, and on the other saw the vast power the new religion had on the lives of its adherents as compared with the influence exerted in this respect by the old. Gradually, and in many cases almost imperceptibly, their visionary ideas transformed themselves into reality, and both the ideal and the real met and centred in Christ. But if there were elements of resemblance between the two systems, they were nevertheless essentially at variance, and presented important points of contrast. "The doctrines of the Incarnation, of the resurrection of the body, and of the creation of the world, in time formed the boundary lines between the dogmatic of the Church and Neoplatonism."<sup>1</sup> On these topics no agreement could be reached. A conflict ensued in which the Church

<sup>1</sup> Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, i. p. 360.

gained the victory.<sup>1</sup> For reasons already stated by Augustine,<sup>2</sup> Neoplatonism failed to make good its claim to be the absolute religion. It had no religious founder ; it could not solve the problem concerning the retention of the ecstatic mood ; it appealed only to the cultured few.

*The Christian Platonists of Alexandria.*

The dual character of the relationship between Hellenism and Christianity is still further exemplified in the writings of the Christian Platonists of Alexandria, notably in those of Clement and Origen.<sup>3</sup> The special task to which these theologians addressed themselves was that of harmonizing the apostolic tradition concerning Christ with the theological conclusions of the Jewish-Alexandrian philosophers—a task which necessarily involved considerable modification of absolute statement on the one side or the other. The problem had been already attempted by the Gnostics, whose wild speculation had on the one hand seriously endangered Christianity by nullifying both the divinity and the humanity of Christ, and on the other amounted to a gross abuse of the Greek philosophy, which was in consequence being widely put under the ban. It was the aim of the Alexandrian theologians to restore philosophy to its true place by substituting for the false gnosis of Basilides

<sup>1</sup> An excellent idea of the nature of the conflict between the Church and Neoplatonism may be gathered from Charles Kingsley's *Hypatia*.

<sup>2</sup> *Confessions*, l.c.

<sup>3</sup> At this point I avail myself of some extracts from my monograph on "Origen" in the *World's Epoch-Makers* series.

and Valentinus a true churchly gnosis which should do justice to the Old and New Testaments alike. Certainly they were not hampered in the execution of their task by any narrow, intolerant, or particularistic view of the Christian tradition; their temptation, indeed, lay in the opposite direction. They were in danger of distorting it, and of destroying its essential character, by a too great readiness to concede the demands of philosophy. So far were they from consenting, with the fiery Tertullian, to denounce philosophy as the fruitful source of heresies, and so convinced were they of its possible value to the Christian faith, that they became themselves philosophers, and proceeded to define their position with regard to existing philosophical schemes of the universe. Not that they exhibited no originality in their thinking, or that it is impossible to decide with respect to fundamental doctrines whether they were derived from Christian or from heathen (Greek or Oriental) sources. But from the fact that many ideas were common to both, the line between philosophy and theology necessarily became very indistinct. Both were developed almost *pari passu*. There was an effort to enrich Christian doctrine by the assumption of elements from the schools, with the twofold result that Christian gnosis was made to include the sum-total of knowledge, and that the distinction between scientific investigation and ecclesiastical orthodoxy was obscured. The points of resemblance between philosophy and Christianity were overestimated, and what was most characteristic of the latter was to a large extent lost sight of. Till well on in the second century Christian teaching, with very few exceptions, had been true to apostolic example;

but after philosophers embraced Christianity, and the new Platonism, which allied itself to Orientalism, began to exert its influence, the case was altered. The intellectual was frequently represented as the chief or only side of Christianity to be attended to ; it was regarded not so much as a rule of life as a speculative scheme of doctrine. From this the transition was easy to "mysteries" similar to those of heathenism. Certain views were kept secret as a higher species of doctrine suitable only for the cultivated few. An attempt was made, in short, to provide the gospel with a philosophy, and to resolve it into such a system as philosophers would be likely to embrace.

Nor is the explanation of all this far to seek. It may at first sight seem strange that Christian teachers could embrace doctrines known to be Platonic, but we must recollect that these same doctrines were supposed to have been borrowed from Holy Scripture, which they believed to be the revelation of God's wisdom to men. Speculative theologians, moreover, have always been influenced by contemporary philosophy, and these Alexandrian Fathers only sought to express the doctrines of the faith in a form adapted to the spirit of the times. Men like Justin and Clement had themselves passed over from heathen philosophy, and naturally carried with them much of its influence ; but they had nevertheless an ardent desire to see Christian truth in its right place. It would be as unwarrantable to seek the main source of their theology in the philosophical speculation of the period as it would be to say that the Hebrew religion was essentially altered in the post-exilic period because it embellished itself somewhat with Persian angelology.



After all, the Alexandrian Fathers "did not exchange the gospel for Neoplatonism." They resolutely maintained the supreme authority of Holy Scripture; and with whatever distortions and incongruities it may have been associated, the assertion of this principle of an objective rule of faith was in itself of the utmost value in combating a philosophy of which the only standard lay in the subjective notions of its advocates.

Clement scouted the idea that Greek learning was the invention of dæmons. Philosophy was in his estimation no work of darkness, but in each of its forms a ray of light from the Logos, and therefore belonging of right to the Christian. Secular learning he held to be ethically indispensable, inasmuch as it needs an intelligent Christian to act justly. What the philosophers of all schools had been aiming at was also the aim of Christianity, namely, a nobler life. The difference, according to Clement, was this: while the ancient philosophers had been unable to get more than glimpses of the truth, it was left to Christianity to make known in Christ the perfect truth. The various epochs in the history of the world all pointed forward to this final revelation, and just as the Law prepared the Jews, so also Philosophy prepared the Greeks for Christ. What he and his fellow-teachers set themselves to do, therefore, was to educate philosophers up to the point of accepting Christianity, which they represented as only a higher development and further advance on the same line as that along which they had themselves been travelling. Christianity was the ultimate goal for all philosophy. While, therefore, Clement admires, and within proper limits defends, philosophy, he maintains its inadequacy as a guide to

the knowledge of God. Although viewing it as good in itself, as a useful weapon for the defence of Christian truth, and as an invaluable aid in the education of the enlightened man—the true Gnostic, he clearly sees its limits, and refuses to set it in the seat of Christ, the one Physician of the soul.<sup>1</sup> If on its intellectual side Clement's theology is coloured by Greek philosophy, on its religious side it is derived directly from Christianity. If he thinks as a Platonist, he feels as a Christian.

The view taken by Origen (c. 185–254) of the relation of Christian doctrine to Greek philosophy is substantially that of Clement, although he rates philosophers somewhat lower than does that writer. Truth he regards as a constant quantity, which from the beginning has been imparted to man only in scattered rays. Of these human wisdom, as embodied in the circle of the sciences, and in the secret doctrines of Chaldæans and Egyptians, Jews and Greeks, has supplied its quota. Divine wisdom, however, as revealed in Christianity, immeasurably transcends the philosophical knowledge of men. The Christian doctrine embraces whatever elements of truth are contained in the Greek philosophy, of which indeed it is the completion. While philosophy is a divinely ordained means of arriving at the truth, and is closely related to Christianity in respect of the funda-

<sup>1</sup> "The teaching which is according to the Saviour is complete in itself and without defect, being 'the power and wisdom of God'; and the Hellenic philosophy does not, by its approach, make the truth more powerful; but rendering powerless the assault of sophistry against it, and frustrating the treacherous plots laid against the truth, is said to be the proper 'fence and wall of the vineyard.' And the truth which is according to faith is as necessary for life as bread; while the preparatory discipline is like sauce and sweetmeats."—*Strom.* i. 20.

mental ideas of God and moral justice which have been written indelibly by the Creator upon the human heart, it is far from being of uniform value. In the form of Epicureanism, for example, it is even hostile to the truth; in that of Platonism, it partly coincides with it. Although viewing the Scriptures as the sole guaranteed source of truth, Origen shared Clement's opinion that human systems of thought also might be at least relatively true. Wherever a spark of good appeared, these Alexandrian teachers gave it acknowledgment. If, however, he recognized philosophy as furnishing a series of steps in the right direction, Origen was also strongly convinced of its inadequacy. While it formed an introduction to the higher wisdom, it was at best an uncertain guide. Philosophers did not succeed in conveying the truth to the popular mind; they were like physicians who attend only to the health of a select few and neglect the multitude. After uttering in the schools the grandest arguments about God, they straightway fell into idolatry and sanctioned polytheism. The secret of the success of the unlettered disciples of Jesus in impressing men of various nationalities, as compared with the failure of the Greek philosophers to win adherents, lay in the fact that in the one case the speakers possessed a certain God-given power which was lacking in the other. This was none other than the power of the Logos which everywhere manifested itself in the Church by abolishing polytheism, and bringing about the moral betterment of gospel hearers in proportion to their capacity and willingness to receive that which is good.

The true goal of the Greek philosophy, as well as of

the revealed wisdom proclaimed by the prophets, was the incarnation of Jesus, which focused all previous self-communications of the Eternal Reason. A knowledge essentially devoid of error is thus guaranteed to us. Men could not reach this anterior to Christ's coming, because it was unattainable apart from the expiation of the world's sin. Without Him perfect knowledge is an impossibility. Clement held that a man's life is likely to be virtuous in proportion to his knowledge of the truth. Origen makes an advance upon this position by identifying human enlightenment with redemption. Men walk in light and practise virtue through Him who is the truth, and who has fulfilled all righteousness. By the union of the divine and human natures in His own person, Christ has become the source of the new life of humanity.

The character of Origen's theological system as a philosophy of revelation accounts for the Gnostic and Neoplatonic features mixed up with it. His speculations often recall the theosophic dreams and fantastic cosmology of Valentinus, and his methods are those of that prominent heresiarch, and of the Neoplatonic schools. In his doctrine of the pre-existence of souls, in his theory of a threefold division of human nature, and in his highly symbolic interpretation of the story of Paradise, his Christian theology clearly shows affinity with those systems. The agreement, however, is not in principle, but is due to the adoption in common of particular Platonic tenets. Like Clement, Origen was at once an advocate and an opponent of Hellenistic philosophy.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE ESSENTIAL INDEPENDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN view of the evidence adduced, it can scarcely be disputed that Hellenistic thought and religion materially affected the structural form of early Christianity. To say this, however, is not to say that it affected its essential content. On the contrary, we have only to compare Hellenism and Christianity with reference to some of the more obvious directions in which they might be expected to present points of contact, or even to occupy common ground, in order to see that the religion of Jesus is no mere product of the age which witnessed its rise, but an absolutely independent revelation of spiritual truth, carrying with it an altogether unique conception of life and morals. For our purpose it may suffice to compare the two religions as regards (1) their general view of God and the world, (2) their conception of the manner in which God reveals His activity in the world, and (3) their estimate of life and conduct.

#### *General View of God and the World.*

In spite of the general influence of philosophy in discarding the myths about the gods, and of occasional

glimmerings of the unity of God discernible on the soil of cultured paganism, the Hellenistic view of deity is on the whole so frankly polytheistic as to offer a complete contrast to the monotheism of Christianity. Although efforts were made variously to explain the primitive Greek mythology as "an invention of legislators" (Aristotle), as an allegorical presentation of religious teaching, or as an imaginative construction of actual history (Euemerus), there was no distinct departure from its polytheistic standpoint. Nor was there on the part of its apologists any recoil from the savage element so characteristic of it. Christians took the view, afterwards expressed by Augustine,<sup>1</sup> that the Hellenistic deities were actual persons, but not divine; they were dæmonic—the souls of dead men. On any hypothesis the religion of Jesus knows nothing of a multiplicity of gods, select or inferior; it asserts the existence of one God, personal, righteous, beneficent, and self-manifesting in word and deed. By its purely spiritual conception of the one living and true God it lifts itself up at once into an atmosphere entirely different from that of the heathen Pantheon. Christianity is also marked off from Hellenism, and indeed from paganism in general, by the fact that it is the only religion that represents God as seeking man, and that antecedently to any desire on man's part for Himself. In the language of the New Testament, the Son of Man, divinely commissioned, "is come to seek and to save that which was lost." This is an entire reversal of the usual order. Other religions, and none more so than the Greek, exhibit man's toilsome search for God, but nowhere else

<sup>1</sup> *De Civ. Dei*, vii. 18, viii. 26.

save in Christianity do we see God with a yearning love searching for man.

Regarding the origin of the world, the Hellenistic religions present us with no clear and consistent view. Their crude and often grotesque cosmogonies point sometimes to the method of creation, sometimes to that of evolution; but in either case they are steeped in irrationality. In simple and majestic contrast stands the Christian doctrine that God called the world into being by a free act of creation. The universe is not eternal, as Origen taught, but "in the beginning" was formed instantaneously out of nothing, and afterwards by the operation of the divine power along with secondary causes gradually transformed from its original chaotic condition into the orderly cosmos which we know. Christianity teaches that everything outside of God derives its existence from His will. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1<sup>16</sup>).

It further belongs to the Christian view that as the effect of God's word and will the world is altogether dependent upon Him, and is governed by Him in infinite wisdom for moral ends. Epicureanism apart, the popular Hellenistic philosophy shares indeed this teleological conception, although with a difference. While acknowledging the divine government, and the accomplishing of its ends in the world, it gives forth no certain sound with reference to the supernatural conditions of whatsoever comes to pass. The varied experiences,



cheering or saddening, which fall to the lot of man, are attributed sometimes to Fate, sometimes to Providence, and sometimes to Chance (Tyche). As reflected in the Homeric poetry, Fate (Μοῖρα) is an impersonal agency regulating man's emotions, especially such as are sudden and inexplicable, and is supreme over gods as well as men. According to Herodotus (i. 90, 91), Cræsus was assured by the Delphic oracle that it was impossible for the god himself (*i.e.* Apollo) to avoid the decrees of Fate. By the time of Æschylus the will of the gods had come to be identified with Moira, except that pleasing events were ascribed to the gods, and disagreeable events to Fate. In the Greek drama we have a contest between the human will and external things, all of which, both bad and good, are bound up with the supernatural Moira. This explains why it was held to be a duty sometimes to fall in with, sometimes to resist, the leadings of Fate. The idea of Fate does not imply paralysis of the human will, as Schlegel and De Quincey assert, nor does the element of predestination enter into it. The Stoic belief that everything is absolutely dependent on universal law and the course of the world found logical expression in the conception of Destiny (ἡ εἰμαρμένη, *sc.* μοῖρα), which Chrysippus defines as the reason of the world (ὁ τοῦ κόσμου λόγος).<sup>1</sup> "Viewed as the groundwork of natural formations, the Primary Being or universal Law is called Nature; viewed as the cause of the orderly arrangement and development of the world, it is called Providence. This is more popularly termed Zeus or the will of Zeus, and in this

<sup>1</sup> By the Stoics the universal reason is also called the λόγος σπερματικός.

sense it is said that nothing happens without his will.”<sup>1</sup> Not only is the world as a whole under the rule of divine Providence, but all without exception is subject to its inviolable law. The determinism of the Stoic system is the direct corollary of its pantheism. Divine Providence extends to individuals, but only as a dependent part of the whole. There is no mention of Tyche in Homer. She is first referred to in the Homeric hymns, then in Hesiod as one greater than ocean nymphs, and appears not to have attained much importance until a considerably later period. In Pindar the idea of divine Providence is often connected with Tyche. Herodotus also (i. 126) speaks of *θεία τύχη* (“I am persuaded that I am born by divine providence to undertake this work”). In later usage Tyche was reckoned a regular deity (like the Latin *Fortuna*), and *Τύχη τυφλή* (blind chance) was quite a common expression. We find, then, in Hellenistic philosophy and religion no clear doctrine regarding the divine ordering of human affairs. Whether it is best to bow to Fate, or trust in Providence, or offer sacrifices to Tyche, is left by its exponents an open question. “Fare ye well, fumlbers,”<sup>2</sup> seems the fitting comment. How different from this vacillating and unsatisfying attitude is the Christian conviction of the glorious certainty: “Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him” (Matt. 6<sup>8</sup>. 32). In the one case we are on a moving bog; in the other our feet are planted on a rock.

By their materialistic and pantheistic view of the world the Stoics, who take rank as the leading repre-

<sup>1</sup> Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen*, iii. p. 161 (4th ed., 1909).

<sup>2</sup> Browning, *Dramatic Idylls*, “Doctor.”

sentatives of Hellenism, were practically debarred from entertaining the thought of personal immortality. They held the soul itself to be corporeal, a fiery breath, which permeates and holds together the body, just as the world-soul permeates and holds together the world. Its seat is not in the brain, but in the breast. It is a unity, all its parts and powers being derived from the basal reason ; and in it lies the Ego or personality. The individual soul is related to the world-soul as the part to the whole, and because of its rationality stands in a special relationship to the divine nature. Like everything else in the world, the soul forms part of the rigid, shackling chain of inevitable cause and effect ; its only freedom consists in the self-determination attainable by co-operation with outward circumstances. At the end of the world, the soul will return to the godhead, although, according to Cleanthes, only the souls of the wise will exist till then. While not absolutely denying a future life, the Stoics maintain that this will be of limited duration. It is noteworthy, however, that on the question of personal immortality Seneca approaches more nearly to the Platonic and Christian positions than the earlier exponents of Stoicism. He speaks of the day when the soul is released from the fetters of the body as the birthday of eternity ; of reunion after death ; and of the freedom and bliss of the heavenly life.

The Christian view with reference to a future life is free from ambiguity, and has the genuine note of independence. As " the light of the world " Christ sheds new light upon the nature and destiny of man. Not that He formulates any definite doctrine of human nature. His teaching on the subject, however, is explicitly

enough conveyed in what He assumes. The purpose of His coming into the world was, He tells us, to save men, and to bestow upon them eternal life (Luke 19<sup>10</sup>; Matt. 25<sup>46</sup>). It follows that in His estimation man is a being of infinite worth, with a truly spiritual nature, capable of union with God, and destined to immortality. This is a clear, coherent, and original view of the spiritual nature and dignity of man such as we look for in vain among Hellenistic teachers and writers. It is also eminently rational; it affords scope for the full play of human powers and aspirations, and stimulates the highest hopes instead of putting a damper upon man's noblest exertions, as does the philosophy that accounts him little or no better than a sheep. On the great question of a future life reason and revelation speak with one voice.

Significant also is the relative attitude of Hellenism and Christianity with reference to the presence of evil in the world and the manner in which it is to be overcome. Both religions recognize the fact of moral and spiritual, as well as physical evil. While according to the Stoic the wise man is absolutely perfect, and the fool a bad man who can do nothing right, the rarity of the wise is freely acknowledged. Cleanthes declares that scarcely an individual succeeds in attaining virtue even towards the close of his life. Seneca is still more emphatic, alleging that the vast majority of men are fools and sinners, and only a few, like Socrates, Diogenes, and Cato, form exceptions to the rule. Nearly as he approaches to it, however, he does not adopt the doctrine of St. Paul that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." The Stoics were naturally much exercised

about the question : How is the perfection of the world (which they affirmed) reconcilable with the existence of manifold evils ? Physical evil they did not regard as actual evil, but as either a necessity resulting from the divine government of the world, or the effect of man's own abuse of things. But the problem of moral evil could not be so easily dismissed. Owing to their determinism they could not fasten the blame on man or on natural law, though sometimes they were disposed to share it between the Godhead and men themselves. Their considered view, however, was that it is not possible for the Godhead to free nature from blemishes, and that for the sake of good itself evil is necessary as its counterpart. Regarding the relation of desert to happiness they taught that, while a part of outward evil may be reckoned as divine punishment, no real evil can befall the good, and no real happiness can be experienced by the bad. The apparent misfortunes of the wise are partly a pure necessity of nature, and partly a salutary exercise of his moral powers. All that befalls us, rightly used, contributes to our happiness, and nothing gained by moral depravity is to be desired. The Stoic Theodicy is certainly not clear and consistent throughout, though in fairness it must be acknowledged that it "does not stand alone in this respect."<sup>1</sup>

A religion cognizant of the fact of evil must suggest some provision for its removal. What, then, was the Hellenistic conception on this point ? It was that of the purification of spiritual evil by physical means. The method prescribed was that of magical purifications, or "ceremonies of riddance," as they were called. In

<sup>1</sup> Zeller, *op. cit.* iii. p. 182,

his capacity as archon of Chæronea it fell to Plutarch to preside over one of these. "A household slave was taken to the common hearth of the city, beaten with stalks of *Agnus castus*, a plant of purifying properties, and driven out of doors with the words: 'Out with hunger; in with wealth and health.' The rite was called the 'driving out of hunger.' . . . Though rites of 'riddance' have a harsh and barbarous sound, we cannot forget that this 'riddance'—half physical though it is—has in it the germs of a higher thing, the notion of spiritual purification."<sup>1</sup> In the Mysteries of Eleusis the nature of the preliminary purification is on record. The candidate bathed in the sea along with a young pig, and by this process both he and his sacrifice were purified together.<sup>2</sup> This was known as *elasis* (driving), and was a ceremony of "riddance." What we have here, then, is the embodiment of the idea that moral evil can be got rid of by careful performance of certain ritual acts—in short, by magic.

The Christian view affirms the fact of sin and of salvation by a Redeemer. It does not conceive of sin as a necessary element in the world's constitution, but as an element of disorder introduced by the wilful departure of man from the path marked out for him by the Creator. By sin it understands disobedience to God in thought, word, or deed. That sin is universal in the human race is presupposed in the general call to repentance (Mark 1<sup>15</sup>). While recognizing that there are relative differences in men (Matt. 7<sup>43-45</sup>), Jesus speaks of men in general as sinners (Luke 13<sup>2</sup>, 15<sup>10</sup>). The

<sup>1</sup> J. E. Harrison, *The Religion of Ancient Greece*, p. 44 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Vit. Phoc.* xxviii.

disciples themselves are "evil" (Luke 11<sup>13</sup>). Sinners are "debtors" towards God (Matt. 6<sup>12</sup>), and sins are "trespasses" (Matt. 6<sup>14</sup>). These expressions show that Jesus looks upon sin as a transgression of the will of God which involves guilt in God's sight. The position of the sinner He describes as that of one who is "lost," separated from God, and liable to His active displeasure here and hereafter. Though special calamities do not necessarily imply special sin (Luke 13<sup>1-5</sup>), God does visit sin with punishment: Jerusalem was destroyed because of the sins of the Jewish people (Luke 19<sup>41-44</sup>). The punishment of the lost will also continue after death, and will consist in the dread calamity of exclusion from the kingdom of God (Matt. 7<sup>23</sup>, 8<sup>12</sup>, etc.). But Jesus brings the "good news" of salvation from sin and its consequences. Salvation is grounded in the Fatherhood of God (Matt. 6<sup>9-15</sup>), and consists in the present free forgiveness of sins (Luke 15<sup>11-24</sup>) and of eternal life in the kingdom of God (Matt. 25<sup>46</sup>; Mark 10<sup>30</sup>). All on whom it is bestowed are admitted to sonship (Matt. 5<sup>45</sup>, 6<sup>26</sup>). As lost children they receive the Father's forgiveness of their sins (Luke 15<sup>11-24</sup>), and in His love He gives to them the kingdom (Luke 12<sup>32</sup>).

There remains the question: What does Jesus teach concerning Himself in this connexion? Apart from the general implication that as the Messiah He is essential to the kingdom, He claims to be the sole Revealer of the Father (Matt. 11<sup>27</sup>). But since the knowledge of God's Fatherhood spells present salvation, this amounts to a claim that He alone can effect the salvation of men. The claim thus made is borne out by His own express declaration: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to



save that which was lost " (Luke 19<sup>10</sup>), as well as by the whole content of His teaching and the whole nature of His saving activity. He reveals the Father's love towards sinful men in such wise as to evoke their trust in the divine Fatherhood, and as such trust is equivalent to the acceptance of Jesus Himself, salvation is essentially bound up with His own person. Hence the call : " Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest " (Matt. 11<sup>28</sup>).

Christianity is the religion of the Incarnation, of the Word made flesh, " Who "—to use the language of its greatest exponent—" being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross " (Phil. 2<sup>6-8</sup>). Its benefits are offered freely to all who truly repent of their sins, and come in faith for salvation to Him who thus atoned for the sin of the world. This is distinctive in Christianity. With reference to sin and salvation, therefore, Christianity differentiates itself very clearly from Hellenistic religion. All without exception it reckons as sinners, and as guilty before God ; to all, to Jew and Greek alike, it proclaims a full and free salvation. It points to no magical rites as a means of cleansing from the defilement of sin, but to the sacrifice of Christ, who gave His life a ransom for many (Matt. 20<sup>28</sup>), and came to save His people from their sins (Matt. 1<sup>21</sup>). Here we are furnished with no mere trifling ceremonial or mechanical means of purification, but with a gospel which satisfies the deepest need of the human soul.

*Conception of the Method of Revelation.*

From this point of view also there are obvious directions in which Hellenism and Christianity might be supposed to present points of contact, or even of identity.

In this category we may reckon first of all the miraculous element. Belief in miracles is a leading characteristic of Hellenistic religion, and it is equally bound up with Christianity. There is also in the two cases an obvious similarity as regards the sphere in which the miraculous is exercised, namely, that of healing the sick and of exorcising evil spirits. But this parallelism does not in itself warrant the conclusion that with respect to the miraculous both stand on a level. In reality there is a wide difference of character and aim between "miracles" associated with Hellenism and those recorded in the New Testament. The story of the expulsion of dæmons from their human victims and of their transference to the Gadarene swine presents, perhaps, peculiar features which more nearly resemble the tales of Hellenistic prodigies than any of the other miraculous events narrated in Scripture; but in general these are marked by a distinctive character of their own. This is borne out by comparing them, for example, with the miracles ascribed to Apollonius of Tyana, the leading reformer of expiring paganism in the Augustan age. The wonderful deeds attributed to him include the cure of the worst maladies, the calling up of spirits from the unseen world, and the raising of the dead to life. But the narrative of his exploits, written by

Philostratus to the order of Julia Domna, mother of Caracalla, is too much in the vein of the tales of the *Arabian Nights* to be inherently credible. It appears to be a romance based upon fact and giving an idealistic representation of its hero, much after the style of Xenophon's *Cyropædia*. Obviously it is a thinly veiled heathenized version of the story of the Gospel, in which Apollonius is presented in the character of what the fashionable paganism of the day conceived Christ should have been. Philostratus, while maintaining that Apollonius was no mere vulgar sorcerer, but a sage who foretold the future not by means of charms or incantations but from a wise conformity to the will of the gods, represents him nevertheless as predicting earthquakes, calming an excited mob by a wave of the hand, knowing all languages without having learned them, and so forth. Thus, if not wholly lacking the spirit of a reformer, Apollonius had apparently no scruple in employing the arts of theurgy and magic by way of gaining influence with the multitude. The same thing is true of Asklepios, the reputed founder of the science of medicine, who was afterwards honoured as a god, particularly at his shrine in Epidaurus. His reputed miracles consist of marvellous cures for which the way is paved by revelations communicated in dreams and containing sundry medical directions. But "none of these miracles have any connexion with the salvation of the soul. They are of importance simply for themselves, and invite to the admiration of the thaumaturgist, to whom it never occurs to cry out to those asking for miracles: 'Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.' " <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heinrici, *op. cit.* p. 33.

The miracles of Jesus differ essentially from those of pagan exorcists and sorcerers who made witch rhymes by which they pretended even to raise the dead to life. In His miracles we see not mere wonders, but deeds of divine love and power, performed less with a view to accredit His own mission than to rescue and succour lost souls. Satan himself could not tempt Him to work a miracle in order to display His power. Nor do the New Testament records furnish any instance of juggling with names, by means of which heathen magicians sought to invoke the aid of heavenly powers. The miracles of Jesus are wrought in His own name,<sup>1</sup> and are simply styled His "works," *i.e.* the natural manifestation of His activity as the Incarnate Son of God. If St. Peter says to the lame man: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3<sup>6</sup>), it is expressly stated in the sequel that by His name is meant His power, and that through faith in His power the man had been made strong (ver. 16).<sup>2</sup> Finally, the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus stands at the utmost remove from such Nature-myths as the revivification of the dismembered Osiris, or of the slain Adonis. It was not from any analogy suggested by the reawakening of Nature in spring-time that the first disciples drew their belief in the resurrection; they accepted it as an absolute fact that Jesus rose again the third day according to the

<sup>1</sup> "He did not employ magical charms and incantation-formulas of a superstitious kind, but only trustful prayer for God's healing power."—Wendt, *The Teaching of Jesus*, ii. p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> "That a superstitious use of Jesus' name, particularly in exorcism, gradually found its way into the Church must be conceded. But there is nothing to show that such was current in the first generation."—Morgan, *op. cit.* p. 204.

Scriptures (1 Cor. 15<sup>4</sup>), and saw in it the fulfilment of divine promise. All this is in sharp contrast to the miraculous element in Hellenistic religions.

Another point for inquiry is raised by the suggestion that the Christian sacraments present features analogous to the "Mysteries" of Hellenistic cults. It is probable that these were "shows or scenic representations of mythical legends";<sup>1</sup> and it is certain that in the Hellenistic world belief in the magical operation of ceremonial rites everywhere prevailed. From the declaration of one initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries—"I ate out of the kettledrum, I drank out of the cymbal, I became a mystic"—it is evident that the mystical union with the divine was regarded as effected *ex opere operato* by the secret ritual. Apuleius represents Lucius, a candidate for initiation into the mysteries of Isis, as deigning to give the following weird and cryptic account of his experiences: "I penetrated the boundaries of death; I trod the threshold of Proserpine, and after being borne through all the elements I returned to earth; at midnight I beheld the sun radiating white light: I came into the presence of the gods below and the gods above, and did them reverence close at hand."<sup>2</sup> The worshippers of Dionysos, in their orgies, ate gory flesh in order bodily to annex the god—a practice which evoked the damaging scoff of the Epicurean priest Cotta: "Do you consider any one mad enough to take for God what he eats?"<sup>3</sup> Is, then, this ethnical theurgy at all reflected in New Testament references to Baptism and the Lord's Supper?

<sup>1</sup> Liddell and Scott, *s.v.* μυστήριον.

<sup>2</sup> *Metamorphosis*, xi.

<sup>3</sup> Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* iii. 16.

Although baptism is certainly spoken of by St. Paul as a symbol of the mystical union with Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6<sup>2-4</sup> ; Gal. 3<sup>27</sup> ; Col. 2<sup>12</sup>), he nowhere represents it as the ground of that union. In Phil. 3<sup>10</sup> the conception of dying and rising with Christ occurs without reference to baptism. The apostle never attributes any magical efficacy to the rite, or makes the reception of the Spirit dependent on it. On the contrary, in his view the power of God unto salvation lies not in any ritual observance, but in the believing reception of the divine word (Gal. 3<sup>5</sup>). He emphatically declares that Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. Nor is this witness at all weakened by the fact that sacramentarianism was already creeping into the Church (Acts 22<sup>16</sup> ; 1 Cor. 15<sup>29</sup>). Alongside of the Pauline position may be set the statement in the (probably spurious) appendix to St. Mark's Gospel : " He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be condemned " (16<sup>16</sup>). It is not to be supposed that in the first part of the antithesis the writer meant that baptism is as essential to salvation as *believing*, and the omission of baptism from the second part is surely significant.

In 1 Cor. 11 St. Paul gives clear expression to his conception of the Lord's Supper. For him, it was not, as for the Corinthian Church, merely a common meal by means of which the participants sought mystical union with the risen Christ. On this view of its religious significance it did not differ essentially from pagan feasts, for in these also it was hoped through partaking of the consecrated meat and drink to secure union with the deity. The Apostle draws a sharp distinction between



these heathen meals and the Supper of the Lord (1 Cor. 10<sup>18</sup> ff.), which he wholly detaches from the notion of a meal (1 Cor. 11<sup>34</sup>), and represents as a religious rite pure and simple. What, then, according to him, is the religious meaning of the rite? In full harmony with the narrative of St. Mark, which probably embodies the oldest tradition, the Pauline account of the first Supper lays stress not on the eating and drinking, but on the broken bread and blood-red wine as giving symbolic expression to the thought of Christ's death as a sacrifice. For St. Paul the Supper is simply an assertion and a memorial of the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus. More has been read into His words. Some will have it that they convey the idea of a transubstantiation of the elements, and of a consequent literal partaking of the Saviour's flesh and blood, but this doctrine of a "real presence," even if compatible with the apostle's language, is not naturally suggested by it.

Indisputably as St. Paul views the Supper as a symbolic representation of Christ's sacrificial death, there yet remains the question whether he does not also regard it as a fellowship with His body and blood, that is, as a means of vital union with Him; and if so, whether He does not therefore hold two contradictory theories on the subject. In 1 Cor. 10<sup>16</sup> ff. there is obviously conveyed the idea of a real union with Christ as brought about through participation in the Supper, but this is followed by a swift transition to the thought of fellowship as between one Christian and another (v. 17); and it is certainly an over-statement to say that he is here speaking from the theurgical standpoint so as to represent the sacrament as a magical agency for effecting a



mystical union between the believer and Christ. Perhaps no better explanation of the difficulty can be given than that offered by Dr. Morgan: "The truth we believe to be this, that in the argument of 1 Cor. 10<sup>14-22</sup>, which has for its object to show the inconsistency of participation in heathen religious meals with a profession of Christianity, the Apostle is working less with his own categories than with those of his readers. What we have is a parallel to his argument from [which does not imply his approval of] the practice of baptizing for the dead. He could the more easily take the Corinthians' standpoint, since the idea of union with Christ was one with which in itself he could find no fault." <sup>1</sup>

It is significant that while St. Paul freely applies the term "mystery" to the gospel, he nowhere uses it with reference to the sacraments. These are reckoned only as the seals of salvation, which is grounded on faith working through love. The futility of the attempt to trace the influence of Hellenistic theurgy in the Pauline expression "put on Christ" <sup>2</sup> is sufficiently shown by

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 226.

<sup>2</sup> According to Sir A. Conan Doyle, St. Paul can be understood only by those who have the needful "occult clue," and who "know something of Mithra worship and the other philosophies which Paul had learned, and woven into his Christianity." He considers that the ceremony of "putting on Mithra" corresponds with the Pauline phrase "putting on Christ," and that "all expressions about redemption by blood are founded upon the parallel of the blood of the bull which was shed by the Mithra worshippers, and in which they were actually baptized."—*The Wanderings of a Spiritualist*, p. 224. Again he says: "The student is well aware that the whole of this sanguinary metaphor is drawn really from the Pagan rites of Mithra, where the neophyte was actually placed under a bull at the ceremony of the *Taurobolium*, and was drenched through a grating with the blood of the slaughtered animal."—*The Vital Message*, p. 186. As a writer

the parallel usages of putting on righteousness, the new man, immortality, etc. The life in Christ is strictly co-ordinated with the life in faith (Gal. 2<sup>20</sup>). In the religion of Jesus there is no place for superstitious ideas or magical arts ; these are all superseded by the preaching of the word, which becomes the power of God unto salvation to them that believe.

Another possible point of comparison between Hellenistic religion and Christianity is that relating to ecstatic rapture. This was certainly a leading feature in the various cults practised throughout the Hellenistic world, and invariably accompanied initiation into the mysteries. A frenzied enthusiasm was regarded as the outward sign of union with the deity. In its grossest form this was closely allied to a grovelling theurgy of the type reflected in modern spiritualism, and was credited with securing to those who exhibited it supernatural knowledge or powers, so long at least as the frenzy lasted. Sometimes, however, it is represented as a permanent condition in which the soul retains the divine presence, or is even identified with the god, as appears from a saying contained in the Mithras liturgy : "Thou art I, and I am thou."<sup>1</sup> In other cases ecstasy is either conceived as an experience in which the bodily senses

of detective stories and books of travel Sir Conan Doyle takes high rank, but his excursions into the domain of theology appear also to partake somewhat of the nature of "wanderings."

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Browning in *Jochanan Hakkadosh* :

As a fine  
Interval shows where waters pure have met  
Waves brackish in a mixture sweet with brine,  
That's neither sea nor river but a taste  
Of both—so meet the earthly and divine,  
And each is either.

are in abeyance while the soul enters into union with the deity, or is philosophically toned down into the Stoic doctrine that the human soul is a spark of the universal reason.

Is there anything in Christianity corresponding to the ecstatic factor in Hellenistic religion? Here it is material to observe at the outset that Jesus Himself was certainly no ecstatic. That He was an enthusiast in the sense of being wholly devoted to the great task entrusted to Him is indeed true. So conscious were His disciples of this that they recalled as applicable to Him the prophetic saying: "I am consumed with zeal for thy house"; and their view is confirmed by the Master's own words: "I have come to throw fire on earth. Would it were kindled already!" His was the single eye that never lost sight of His calling, and His the absolute obedience that never faltered, and enabled Him at last to say: "Father, I have glorified Thee on the earth by accomplishing the work Thou gavest Me to do." But between this morally-conditioned enthusiasm and that of the Hellenistic theurgist, or that of the Mithras mystic who sought by screams and laboured breathing to inhale the divine so as in ecstatic rapture to lose all consciousness of things seen and temporal, there is a great gulf fixed.

It is in connexion with the Pauline Epistles that the question really arises. The presence of the mystical elements here is unmistakable. Believers are frequently spoken of as being "in Christ" (Rom. 16<sup>7</sup>; 1 Cor. 1<sup>30</sup>; 2 Cor. 5<sup>17</sup>, etc.), and Christ is said to be "in" them (Rom. 8<sup>10</sup>; Col. 1<sup>27</sup>, etc.). The force of the preposition is not precisely the same throughout, but in every case

it points to close and vital union. Christians, moreover, are united with Christ in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6<sup>41</sup>). "I have been crucified with Christ," says the apostle; "nevertheless I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2<sup>20</sup>). This language undoubtedly points to a mystical union, the nature of which cannot be clearly defined. But history shows that ecstasy is the invariable concomitant of mystical piety. To be a mystic is to have, in Brown-ing's phrase, "a brain for ecstasies attempered." And St. Paul is no exception. He had the gift of speaking with tongues, and was caught up into the third heaven and into paradise, and heard sacred secrets which no human lips can repeat. Whence, then, this mystical vein in the religion of the apostle? Obviously it was derived neither from the Old Testament nor from Jewish Apocalyptic, which do not represent the ecstasy of the prophets as the climacteric of piety, or view the action of the Spirit on the heart of man as being of a mystical character. It is equally clear that it cannot be traced to the teaching of Jesus, whose only norm of piety is that of faith in, obedience to, and moral affinity with God. Unless, therefore, we are to regard the apostle's mysticism as simply evolved from his own consciousness—a theory invalidated by the fact that it was no special monopoly of his own (Rom. 6<sup>3</sup>)—we must conclude that it is traceable to the mystical ideas prevalent in Hellenistic religion.

The account given by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 14 of the phenomena of speaking with tongues strikingly resembles the terms used by Plato in the *Phædrus* (245) concerning ecstatic enthusiasm. Raised to actual union with the

immortal, the speaker expresses himself in a form intelligible only to the initiated. He is filled with "a holy frenzy." Similarly the Pythian priestess at Delphi, possessed with the deity, delivers her enigmatical oracles in a mental condition far removed from normal self-control, and behaves like one demented. With this we may compare St. Paul's question to the Corinthians who placed "tongues" in the very forefront of spiritual gifts: "If at a gathering of the whole church everybody speaks with tongues, and if outsiders or unbelievers come in, will they not say you are insane?" (1 Cor. 14<sup>23</sup>). For without an interpreter "tongues" are merely empty breath (1 Cor. 14<sup>9</sup>); they may edify the speaker himself, but not the church, for people will not understand what is said.

What, then, is the apostle's own attitude towards this demonstrative and so much coveted gift? Briefly this, that though he possessed and used it himself, he regarded it as inferior to the gift of prophecy or preaching, unless the speaker with "tongues" could interpret what he said so as to edify the church. The edification of the church was the main thing to be kept in view; rather would he say five words with his own mind for the instruction of other people than ten thousand words in a tongue<sup>1</sup> (1 Cor. 14<sup>19</sup>).

As for the visionary and ecstatic experience recorded in 2 Cor. 12, it is significant that St. Paul speaks of it

<sup>1</sup> The notable outburst of enthusiasm at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), when many spoke with tongues, though ascribed by St. Peter to the outpouring of the Spirit, is represented as an exceptional episode, and not as belonging to the regular and ordered life of the congregation. Cf. Schmiedel's article on "Spiritual Gifts" in *Encyc. Bib.*

with reluctance, and only because forced to do so by his opponents. That it was an exceptional experience is clear from his assigning to it a date; but, although he certainly viewed it as an extraordinary manifestation of grace vouchsafed to himself, he is far from placing it on a level with the sight of the risen and glorified Jesus through which he was called to be an apostle (Gal. 1<sup>15</sup>; 1 Cor. 9<sup>1</sup>, 15<sup>8</sup>).

In the New Testament these instances of ecstatic rapture are referred to the intrinsic divine activity of the Spirit. The apostle speaks of them as "revelations of the Lord" (2 Cor. 12<sup>1</sup>), and as one form of "the manifestation of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 12<sup>7</sup>). Is there anything here analogous to the Hellenistic doctrine that to every one is divinely given his *dæmon* (δαίμων) to be his life-companion and guide? <sup>1</sup> The familiar instance of Socrates points to the conclusion that in this way an indwelling supernatural power was supposed to repress the natural bent of men. For every disciple of Jesus the Spirit is the source of life (2 Cor. 3<sup>6</sup>), a revealing and sanctifying power (1 John 2<sup>27</sup>; 2 Thess. 2<sup>13</sup>), imparting truth and inspiring conduct (John 14<sup>26</sup>; Gal. 5<sup>18</sup>). He brings to remembrance the words and works of Christ (John 14<sup>26</sup>), and takes possession of the Christian so as to make him His instrument (Matt. 10<sup>20</sup>). It is the Spirit's function to weld the whole company of believers in Jesus into one regularly organized body, and to make all human gifts contribute to the edification of the community (1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4<sup>4-16</sup>). The Spirit is therefore peculiarly the tie that binds men's hearts in brotherly love, and the guarantee that they

<sup>1</sup> *Marc. Aurel.* v. 27.



are the Lord's. At this point the analogy between Hellenism and Christianity completely fails. Where not co-ordinated with the reason, the *dæmon* is essentially a personal possession bestowed by the gods upon their favourites, and viewed by them as their own monopoly. Judged from the ecstatic standpoint no less than from that of miracles and "mysteries" the claims of Christianity to be an independent religion are amply vindicated.

The same result is arrived at if we compare Hellenism and Christianity in respect of eschatology. In the language used in Rom. 8<sup>19</sup> about the yearning of the mute creation for happier conditions Hellenistic influence may possibly be traceable, and in the declaration of 2 Pet. 3<sup>10</sup> concerning the destruction of the present world by fire it is obviously so; but in its fundamental characteristics Christian eschatology stands altogether apart from Hellenistic ideas with regard to the last things. The Greek expectation of the return of the golden age, the Platonic conception of a transmigration of souls, the Stoic doctrine of a cycle of things, and of the reconstitution in an improved form of the old world after it has been burned up, find no echo in the teaching of Jesus. His announcement of His Second Coming, and of the last judgement, is as explicit as His foretelling of His death and resurrection; and St. Paul in 1 Cor. 15<sup>21 ff</sup> shows how all these are bound up together. Elaborate delineations of the pains of hell, so characteristic of Hellenistic religious teaching, are absent from His references to the judgement. The exceptionally detailed description of Matt. 25<sup>31 ff</sup> regarding the sheep and the goats, is based on ideas current in later Judaism. In general, the New Testament allusions to the Second



Advent do not go beyond indicating the joy of uninterrupted fellowship with the Lord. Occasionally the figure of a banquet is used to convey the idea of the blessedness in store for the true disciple (Matt. 8<sup>11</sup>, 26<sup>29</sup>; Luke 22<sup>30</sup>), but for the most part this is conceived in entirely spiritual fashion as blissful communion with Christ, or as perfect vision of the truth now only imperfectly apprehended by faith (1 Cor. 13<sup>9 f.</sup>). It may be unhesitatingly affirmed that the Christian eschatological ideas, the purest expression of which is contained in John 14<sup>2 f.</sup> ("In my Father's house are many mansions: were it not so, would I have told you I was going to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, so that you may be where I am"), are in no vital particular at all affected by Hellenistic influence.

The essential independence of the religion of Jesus is proved, however, above all by the distinctive character of the Christian doctrine of reconciliation. This is simply and definitely expressed in the statement of St. Paul: "God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5<sup>18</sup>). In Christianity salvation is wholly and indissolubly connected with the historical personality and work of Jesus of Nazareth. All centres in Him. Whereas in Hellenistic religion it is the offerer of sacrifices who seeks to propitiate the deity by his gifts, in Christianity it is far otherwise. Christ, "by the one offering of himself," renders all other sacrifices needless. Out of love to mankind God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all"; unsought by us, Jesus offered Himself on our behalf, and "once suffered

for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." The fact that thus "the Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20<sup>28</sup>), invests the sacrifice of Christ with a unique character, to which we find no parallel in Hellenistic religion. The death of Socrates, for example, has no such significance in relation to salvation. The apotheosis of Greek sages is a mere matter of personal honour, and the deification of Hellenistic princes a purely political act standing in no relation to the soul's salvation. Legendary tales of the apparition of heavenly men characteristic of late Judaism (2 Macc. 3<sup>24-26</sup>; Josephus, *De Bell. Jud.* vi. 5. 3), and of Oriental religions, have nothing in common with the Christology of the New Testament, which presupposes an altogether peculiar link of union between God and man. Hence the message of salvation is not based upon the pre-existence of Christ in heavenly glory, but upon His historical activity in the days of His flesh. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth";—that is the starting-point of the whole development of the history of salvation. The great redemptive fact, the final historical completion of His redemptive work, is the death of Christ upon the cross, through which God and sinners are reconciled; and His resurrection is the divine testimony to its power and significance. Through His resurrection He is attested not only as Christ, but also as Lord. He rules the kingdom entrusted to Him until the final consummation, when, His task completed, He shall willingly hand over the government to God the Father, in order that as absolute Sovereign He may be all in all (1 Cor. 15<sup>25-28</sup>). Here, then, at the very core of the Christian gospel, we

meet with no trace of Hellenistic influence at all; it stands forth as a message of salvation—peerless, fresh, original, and independent.

*Estimate of Life and Conduct.*

From this standpoint the comparison is not strictly between Christianity and Hellenistic religion; it is rather between Christian ethics and the popular philosophy viewed in its moral and religious aspects. Hellenistic religion in general was as notoriously weak on the ethical as it was strong on the ritualistic side. It laid stress not upon morals, but upon the performance of ritual acts, in this respect radically differing from the religion of Christ. The strength of the later Stoicism, on the other hand, lay largely in its pronounced practical tendency—a feature which it shared with the philosophy of the Epicureans and Sceptics—and in its stern morality. Its principal concern was not theoretical knowledge, but moral elevation, and in this way, among educated circles at least, philosophy now took the place of the popular religion, which failed to meet what was felt to be a clamant need.

When, after the battle of Chæronea (B.C. 338), Greece lost her political independence, the idea gained ground that true satisfaction is to be found only through the withdrawal of the attention from outward things and fixing it upon the inner self. To this conviction, for which the way had already been so far prepared by Socrates and the Sophists, who attached importance only to what was of practical value for human life, are to be traced alike the apathy of the Stoic, the self-sufficiency of the Epicurean, and the calmness of the

Sceptic. These three schools were at one in asserting that happiness consists in undisturbed rest of soul (*ἀταραξία*); they differed only with respect to the means by which this can be attained.

Another and kindred result of the political subjection of so many peoples at this epoch was the comparative decay of nationalism and the steady trend towards the idea of humanity. The new contact between East and West, between Greek and barbarian, led to the detachment of the moral from the political, and to the conception of the ethical life as a relationship of man to man, apart from all considerations of state connexion or official position. The spirit of the age showed itself in the growing disposition to recognize the essential unity of all men, and their title to rank equally as citizens of the great kingdom of humanity. And here we strike the first point of apparent agreement between the Hellenistic philosophy and the Christian conception of life. The language in which the later Stoicism speaks of the unity of all men presents a strong resemblance to the moral universalism of Jesus. When Epictetus says: "A Cynic must love those who flog him as though he were the father or brother of all mankind"; [and again] "What ought not to be done, do not even think of doing"; [and yet again] "If thy brother do thee wrong, take not this thing by the handle, He wrongs me; for that is the handle whereby it may not be carried. But take it rather by the handle, He is my brother, nourished with me; and thou wilt take it by a handle whereby it may be carried," the sentiment at once appeals to us as truly Christian. Nor does Epicureanism fall behind the rival school in this respect. Its founder

is even credited with giving utterance to the very words of Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

The solidarity of the human race is, then, equally affirmed by the leading representatives of Hellenistic philosophy and by the Founder of the Christian faith. But here the resemblance ends, for in the two cases the claim is made on different grounds and leads to different results. Only as citizens of the world did the Hellenistic philosophy assert the unity of all men, and this idea of citizenship meant at most an enlarged nationalism; it could not effect full emancipation from the national spirit, nor could it sweep away the confusion arising from the mixed character of cosmopolitanism. Moreover, by its elevation of "the wise" to a position of splendid isolation, it practically disowned the unity which it so loudly proclaimed, and fostered the growth of a one-sided intellectualism. Instead of giving rise to a flowing current of universal brotherhood, it lost itself among the quicksands of individualistic sentimentality. The universalism of Jesus rests upon quite another basis than that of the Hellenistic philosophy. It is founded, not upon the original unity of mankind—although it fully recognizes this (Acts 17)—but upon the principle that all men are alike capable through grace of standing in a relation of sonship to God. In spite of the once-occurring apparent limitation of the scope of Christ's earthly mission to Jews (Matt. 15<sup>24</sup>),<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Ewald appropriately observes how, on this occasion, Jesus shows His greatness in a twofold way: first, in prudently and resolutely confining Himself to the sphere of His own country; and then in no less thoughtfully overstepping this limit whenever a higher reason rendered it proper to do so, and as if to foreshadow what was going to take place a little further on in the future."—Meyer, *Comm.* *ad loc.*

the general strain of His teaching has reference to men universally, and in the course of His ministry this universalism, which from the first was implicit, became quite explicit (Matt. 15<sup>21 ff.</sup>; Luke 7<sup>2-10</sup>, 13<sup>29</sup>, 21<sup>3</sup>). The Christian gospel regards all men as on an equality before God; it addresses all alike; and its appeal is purely spiritual. It differentiates itself from many of the religious systems hitherto in vogue, Hellenism among the rest, by an entire absence of occult or secret doctrines for the initiated. There is nothing hidden about it; both Jesus and His messengers proclaim it openly. Of ritualistic ceremonial, elaborate purifications, and ascetic fasts it knows nothing. The soul it declares to be man's most precious possession, and all efforts to purify it by means of "dead works" it pronounces futile. There is only one way to overcome temptation and lust, sordid avarice, and carking care, and that is to cleanse the soul from all that separates from God, by obtaining through Christ the power to claim the privilege of sonship with God and of citizenship in His kingdom. For the individual salvation implied in the idea of sonship does not exclude the social aspect of salvation, which finds pointed expression in the very name "kingdom of God." The central feature in Christ's presentation of the kingdom is the blessedness of the human spirit through the vision of God and eternal fellowship with Him. But He makes it also clear that all God's sons are brethren (Matt. 23<sup>9</sup>), and as members of one great family, partakers in common of the bounty of the divine Fatherhood. God is at once "my Father" (Matt. 6<sup>4</sup>) and "our Father" (Matt. 6<sup>9</sup>). Jesus came to set up a kingdom of God upon earth, a new social



order, a world-wide human brotherhood energized and permeated by His own spirit, a kingdom destined to develop until the end of the world and His Second Advent as Judge. In representing the historical aim of Christ's work to be the establishment of such a kingdom, Christianity, viewed as the fulfilment of the idea foreshadowed in the Old Testament, occupies a unique position among the Faiths of the world. No other religion ever proposed to itself so magnificent an aim, or so frankly avowed it. In all this there is no trace of dependence on Hellenism. Even in its highest forms "heathenism is the religion of the natural man";<sup>1</sup> Christianity is the religion of the Spirit. Here the conditions are of a purely moral and spiritual kind; "there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3<sup>28</sup>).

Rejecting the Platonic dualism, Stoic philosopher and Christian alike taught the necessity of a complete change of mind in order to the attainment of "virtue" or the "new life." "If you wish to be good, first believe that you are bad," is an axiom with Epictetus, and to its truth striking testimony is borne by one who in the *Papyrus Didot*<sup>2</sup> credits the Stoic view of life with having revealed to him his better self. "The life I have lived heretofore" [he says], "was only death. . . . All lay in darkness. From the moment of my coming hither (*i.e.* becoming wise), however, I was cured like one who has experienced the miraculous sleep in the sanctuary of Asklepios. I am henceforth revived, I am changed, I listen to reason, I reflect." If

<sup>1</sup> Müller, *The Christian Doctrine of Sin*, ii. p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Neues Jahrb. für das klass. Altertum*, 1908, p. 41.



not identical, this is certainly coincident with the statement of St. Paul: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5<sup>17</sup>). The change of disposition thus equally insisted on by Hellenist and Christian is represented as radical and momentary, as a transition from darkness to light, and that so sudden that, in the case of the Stoic at least, the consciousness of it is developed only out of subsequent experience.

Yet when we have regard to the means by which in the two cases this result is avowedly reached, we find that there is the sharpest divagation. Alive to the necessity of inward regeneration, the Stoic seeks to achieve this by sheer strength of moral determination. He is convinced that through heroic exertion of will he can succeed. For him virtue is no divine gift, but the result of individual effort. Cicero remarks that "no one has ever thanked the gods that he is an upright man";<sup>1</sup> for this the Stoic considers that he is sufficient unto himself. Now this is the very antithesis of the Christian position as set forth in the Pauline declaration: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15<sup>10</sup>). While the Stoic speaks of virtue, the apostle speaks of the gift of grace; while the Stoic views a virtuous character as the reward due to victorious endeavour, the Christian teacher yields himself to God and humbly asks for strength to do his duty. In the one case every moral and spiritual possession is regarded as self-acquired; in the other, a man is considered to have nothing that he has not received (1 Cor. 4<sup>7</sup>). Not less opposed to the Christian conception is that of Hellenists of the mystic and ascetic type represented by Porphyry.

<sup>1</sup> *De Nat. Deor.* iii. 36.

Their aim was through the practice of theurgy and magic to effect a progressive release of the soul from the clog of the flesh, and thus to arrive at a state of trance-like beatitude or pensive ecstasy untroubled by the ache that attends upon either desire or satiety. It may be doubted whether in this direction any result was obtained beyond the half stupor produced by a narcotic ; but the relevant point to be noticed is that in looking to magical devices and arts as a means of renewal the mystic Hellenist followed a course entirely the reverse of the " simplicity " that is in Christ.

Both Christianity and Hellenism are concerned with the idea and development of free personality ; but here again apparent agreement goes along with essential opposition. For although it is true that the adherents of both systems aim at the building up of a free personality on the foundation of the natural constitution of man, it is also true that in seeking to achieve this end they proceed upon entirely different principles. Epicureanism, laying the basis of free personality in the flesh, presents in this respect the utmost contrast to Christianity, of which the ideal is emancipation from fleshly bondage. On this point there is more of kinship between Christianity and Stoicism. Stoicism asserts the lordship of reason over the affections, and the constant struggle for supremacy between the higher and lower tendencies of human nature. In like manner Paul, the apostle of Christianity, frequently speaks of the conflict between flesh and spirit. But here, too, account must be taken of an important divergence both in the conduct of the struggle and in the results obtained. The Stoic relies on his own power of will to arm him

for the fight ; the Christian, on the power given to him by the Spirit of God. And thus while in the case of the Stoic the contest resolves itself into a never-ending opposition between duty and inclination, in that of the Christian it is far otherwise. Strengthened by the Spirit with power in the inner man, he conquers the flesh. According to the Platonic doctrine, which in this particular is also that of the Stoic philosophy, the noble slave in us, to whom liberty is due, remains fettered in the cave ; but in gratitude for the means of waging a triumphant warfare, and speaking out of the consciousness of a realized freedom, St. Paul can say : “ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord ” (Rom. 7<sup>25</sup>). With all his insistence on the freedom of the will, Epictetus is a fatalist, and his idea of man’s true freedom was consequently limited in comparison. The truth is, that in spite of the individualistic character of both the Epicurean and Stoic schools of philosophy they failed to grasp in its fulness the idea of personality. There was no due recognition of the value of the soul and of the obligations attaching to existence. Further, it has to be borne in mind that for the Stoic and for the Christian freedom does not mean the same thing. To the question, “ What is freedom ? ” Seneca answers, “ Not to be afraid either of men or gods ” (*Ep.* 75. 18). But this definition is totally inapplicable to Christian freedom, which consists in deliverance from the dominion of sin as the prelude to a new service of righteousness. A Christian necessarily “ fears ” God, not, however, with an abject, but with a reverential and loving fear ; he worships the righteous Father. Loving also his neighbour as himself, he looks upon him not as an

opponent to be dreaded, but as one whom he can serve. So far from cultivating, like the Stoic, a haughty independence, the Christian seeks to combine freedom with service. "For though I be independent of all," says the great apostle of the Gentiles, "yet have I made myself a bondsman to all, that I might gain the more" (1 Cor. 9<sup>19</sup>), namely, for Christ and His kingdom. While the Hellenistic philosopher stands proudly aloof from the multitude whom he reckons to be still in bondage, the Christian deems it no compromise of freedom to accommodate himself to their necessities in ministering self-denial. It belongs to the very conception of Christian freedom that it is not a thing to be selfishly enjoyed without reference to the welfare of others. To serve them does not impinge upon it; rather does it find in such service a fit sphere for exercise. The reply of Epictetus to the question, "Who is free?" has more affinity with the Christian point of view. His answer is: "The man who masters his own self." In declaring that "no one is a slave whose will is free," and that "he is free whose body is bound, but whose soul is free," he is certainly in line with the statement of St. Paul: "He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (1 Cor. 7<sup>22</sup>). Freedom is the favourite theme, the greatest aspiration, of this philosopher. When Barbour wrote in *The Bruce*:

Ah, freedom is a noble thing,  
It maketh man to have liking,

and Lovelace penned the lines:

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage,

they were but echoing what Epictetus had said long before. If, like other Stoics, Epictetus, in discussing the secret of happiness, repeats the vague formula about the need for living in conformity with nature, he mainly urges the necessity of being free, of sitting loose to all earthly interests. And it is in keeping with this that he should so constantly dwell upon man's power to render himself independent of circumstances, to bear whatever occurs, and to accept the inevitable. Along with resignation to the will of God, it is essential to master every passion and root out every desire. Only thus can happiness be secured, and all we need to gain it is the exercise of will. Yet Epictetus is not altogether consistent in this assertion of man's ability to work out his own salvation. In his striking portraiture of the true Cynic he speaks of the necessity of divine help in the arduous task of reaching happiness. "It lies in yourselves ; in true freedom, in the absence or conquest of every ignoble fear ; in perfect self-government ; in a power of contentment and peace, and the ' even flow of life ' amid poverty, exile, disease, and the very valley of the shadow of death. . . . Only by God's aid can you attain to this. Only by His aid can you be beaten like an ass, and yet love those who beat you, preserving an unshaken unanimity in the midst of circumstances which to other men would cause trouble, and grief, and disappointment and despair." Although the moral teachings of Epictetus—that " great heathen preacher "—are known to us chiefly at second hand, through the medium of his pupil Arrian, it is impossible not to ponder them without feeling that he was not far from the kingdom of God ; yet it is equally impossible not to

perceive that in all that concerns the question of happiness and the problem of life's trials and sufferings Christianity has taught us a more excellent way. "There is frequently an appearance of paradox and artificial speaking in Epictetus which does not show itself in St. Paul—that is to say, the language of the New Testament becomes natural, because of its enlarged horizon of the other world. Epictetus seems as if he had come after or before his time; too late for philosophy, too early for religion." <sup>1</sup>

A further point for consideration here is the relative position of Hellenism and Christianity with reference to a guiding principle of conduct. This the Epicureans found in self-gratification. Horace sums up their standpoint in two words—*Carpe diem*, seize the moment, enjoy the present. Pleasure, they said, is the chief good; snatch it therefore while you may. St. Paul similarly represents their animating principle of conduct to be: "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die" (1 Cor. 15<sup>32</sup>), <sup>2</sup> and warns his readers against being led astray morally through contact with deniers of the resurrection; for the natural, though not the necessary, result of disbelief in the resurrection is self-gratification (1 Cor. 15<sup>31</sup> <sup>1</sup>)—the very antithesis of the Christian principle of self-denial (Mark 8<sup>34</sup>). The truth is, the Epicurean philosophy as a whole is utterly antichristian. It is frankly materialistic, and takes account of the present life only, whereas it is of the essence of Chris-

<sup>1</sup> Dean Church, *Occasional Papers*, i. p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps inaccurate to call this an Epicurean maxim, as it seems to have first originated with Jews; but certainly no words could more exactly express the spirit of that philosophy, and in consequence they rapidly came into general circulation.

tianity to "look not at the things which are seen and temporal, but at those things which are unseen and eternal" (2 Cor. 4<sup>18</sup>). Its adherents try to keep sorrow at arm's length, whereas it is distinctive of the Christian to "glory in tribulations also" (Rom. 5<sup>3</sup>). And while the Epicurean aims at absolute imperturbability of soul (*ἀταραξία*), the Christian cultivates the higher art of learning in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content. The rest sought for is in the one case entirely self-centred; in the other it is a rest in the Lord.

The Stoic found his guiding star in self-reliance and endurance of the inevitable. Wrapped in all the pride of conscious virtue laboriously and resolutely won, he maintained towards the world in general an attitude of haughty independence. His life represented the triumph of the human will, alike over the passions and over outward circumstances. He called himself a king, and in a masterful and lordly spirit pitilessly repressed the affections. When he had lost wife, children, and property, Stilpo declared that he had lost nothing, because he retained in his own person all that he possessed. It was also the proud boast of the Stoic that he rose superior to both joy and sorrow, considering it beneath him to be affected by either. "The man who has learnt to triumph over sorrow" [says Seneca], "wears his miseries as though they were sacred fillets upon his brow, and nothing is so entirely admirable as a man bravely wretched."<sup>1</sup> According to this form of Hellenistic philosophy, life's trials are best faced with a complacent and apathetic indifference. Along with this, endurance of the inevitable, proceeding from a lofty contempt for

<sup>1</sup> *Consolation to his Mother Helvia*, written in exile.



external misfortunes—which as merely ugly semblances cannot touch the soul—is also a leading feature in the Stoical view of life. Such things cannot move the true Stoic to either regret or anger. With evident relish Epictetus tells how Agrippinus, on learning that he had been condemned by the Senate, merely inquired, “To death or to banishment?” “To banishment,” said the messenger. “Is my property confiscated?” “No.” “Very well, then let us go as far as Aricia and dine there.” The same admiration for the power of endurance characterizes the royal Roman Stoic, Marcus Aurelius, one of whose precepts runs thus: “Be like the promontory against which the waves continually break, but it stands firm and tames the fury of the water around it.” There is a certain cold grandeur about this strong defiant air of the Stoic, which he did not fail to manifest toward death itself. “I must die. Be it so; but need I die groaning?” So speaks Epictetus, who also to the threat, “I will cut off your head,” laconically replies: “Did I ever tell you that my head was the only one which could not be cut off?” Pascal may well speak of “the diabolical pride” of a writer whom in other respects he so greatly admires.

How does all this compare with the teaching of Christianity? For the most part it amounts to an utter negation of the great principle on which the active life of the Christian is based: “Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10<sup>31</sup>). It is his own glory that the Stoic seeks; the Christian aims at glorifying God through service. While the aim of the Stoic is to deify himself through masterful domination of the reason over the emotions and the

affections, that of the Christian is to recognize and sanctify them. On the one hand, we have arrogant self-assertion and proud self-reliance; on the other, gentleness and humble dependence upon God. That the Christian is in possession of a secret unknown to the Stoic is revealed in that apostolic word: "When I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12<sup>10</sup>). His strength is derived from above. Over against Stoic conceit and haughtiness towards other men stand Christian gentleness and lowliness of mind. Far from manifesting a spirit of apathy, the Christian is "fervent in spirit," and has "joy in the Holy Ghost." Like the Stoic, indeed, he steels himself to endure; but for him endurance is no stolid and self-sufficient fortitude in presence of the ills of life, but a gracious, willing, and purposeful participation in the sufferings of Christ. He endures as seeing Him who is invisible, and in the strength of the Saviour's promise: "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mark 13<sup>13</sup>). The Stoic's lofty contempt for human suffering smacks of affectation. As Dean Farrar has said: "The Stoic wise man is a sort of moral Phoenix, impossible and repulsive. . . . Shall Christians be jealous of such wisdom as Stoicism did really attain, when they compare this dry and bloodless ideal with Him who wept over Jerusalem and mourned by the grave of Lazarus, who had a mother and a friend, who disdained none, who pitied all, who humbled Himself to death, even the death of the cross, whose divine excellence we cannot indeed attain because He is God, but whose example we can imitate because He was very man?"<sup>1</sup> Clearly, in

<sup>1</sup> *Seekers after God*, p. 329.

regard to the practical conduct of life, the Hellenist and the Christian are guided by radically different principles.

Finally, there remains the question: How does Hellenism compare with Christianity as regards the actual discharge of life's duties? Are there any affinities discoverable here? Viewing the matter first of all from the standpoint of individual ethics, we are at once struck with a fundamental difference of attitude with respect to personal morality. For the Christian, chastity is obligatory; for the Hellenist, it is a matter of indifference (*ἀδιάφορον*), and if practised more or less by the "pious," assumes only the form of an unhealthy asceticism. Here the cleavage is manifest and deep. And it extends to other parts of the moral law as well, for example, to that against theft. According to Epicurus, the evil lies not in stealing, but only in being found out;<sup>1</sup> and if the Stoics contested this position, they were yet fain to confess: "Truly we ourselves speak fair and honest things, and do vile ones."<sup>2</sup> In sharp contrast to this stand the Christian precepts: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness" (Luke 12<sup>15</sup>); "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4<sup>28</sup>). Scarcely less striking is the antithesis presented by the two systems in their estimation of work. To the Greek way of thinking the labourer is

<sup>1</sup> For neither does Epicurus himself declare stealing to be bad, but only to be caught stealing; and because it is impossible to be certain of no discovery, therefore he saith, "Ye shall not steal."—Epictetus, *Diss.* iii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

a fettered bondsman, and only the leisured "wise" man is free to occupy himself about spiritual things. Christianity, on the other hand, in the person of its Founder, who toiled as a carpenter at Nazareth, ennobles labour as at once Godlike and God-glorifying. Jesus speaks of the allotment to every man of His work, and demands diligence, fidelity, and watchfulness in the performance of it (Matt. 25<sup>14 ff.</sup>; Mark 13<sup>34 ff.</sup>). In what He says of the joy of harvest (John 4<sup>36</sup>) He emphasizes the moral worth of labour and the satisfaction which it yields. Apostolic teaching strikes the same note, laying down the drastic rule that "if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thess. 3<sup>10</sup>). A further marked contrast in this connexion appears from the way in which Hellenist and Christian respectively bear their trials. Like the ancient Greeks, the Hellenist attributes adversity to the wrath or jealousy of the gods, and is principally concerned to appease or ward them off. His is at best a shuddering piety; he is under the spirit of bondage to fear (Rom. 8<sup>15</sup>). The Christian position is the very reverse of this, and leads to the adoption of a wholly different attitude towards trial. Alive to the purifying and educative purpose and effect of suffering, the Christian "glories in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed" (Rom. 5<sup>3 ff.</sup>). Safely sheltered within the sanctuary of Christ's sacrificial blood, he faces the physical hardships and dangers which are his inevitable portion in a spirit of exultation. So far from shaking, these only strengthen his firmness of purpose.

In the sphere of social ethics also Hellenism and Christianity exhibit features of radical diversity. The popular philosophy of the Hellenistic period made no attempt to find a solution for even the most clamant social problems. If not utterly blind to the existence of the diseases of society, it took no cognizance of them, and took no steps to heal them. Its attitude was rather that of the contemptuous superiority assumed by Horace towards the *profanum vulgus*. Now "the essential purpose of Christianity was to transform human society into the kingdom of God by regenerating all human relations and reconstituting them in accordance with the will of God."<sup>1</sup> But whilst the primitive Church yearned for a radically new era, the circumstances of its environment were such that except within certain limits it was impossible for it to reconstruct society on a Christian basis. What are the facts? To have launched any crusade against social wrongs would simply have been to court death by the Roman sword. The Christians of the first century, moreover, were convinced that the end of the world was near, and that the empire of Rome with its debased social life would cease automatically with the coming of the Lord. Nothing else seemed open to Christians than to cut themselves adrift as far as possible from the heathen world, and so check the power of the "dæmons" under whose control it was believed to be. Consequently, "in spite of the powerful social impetus residing in primitive Christianity, such a process of conscious moral reconstruction of society as we conceive to-day was both theoretically and practically out of the question

<sup>1</sup> Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. xiii.

in the first three centuries.”<sup>1</sup> Yet something has to be set down to the credit of the Early Church in this connexion. For one thing it rendered signal service to family life as the social type for the moral world. The “wise” offered no opposition to infanticide by exposure or otherwise, but Christianity does full justice to the child. In the incident which shows the highest culture of the age bending reverently before the unconscious Babe of Bethlehem as the true Divinity (Matt. 2<sup>11</sup>), as well as in the emphatic declaration of Jesus that what constitutes true greatness is the possession of a childlike spirit (Matt. 18<sup>2</sup>), we are furnished with conclusive evidence on this point. And whereas the popular philosophy did nothing to improve the position of woman, Christianity asserts the equality of the wife with her husband by ascribing to her the dignity of a free personality and recognizing her as a fellow-heir of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3<sup>7</sup>). It further introduced into the world a new spirit of redeeming pity which sought expression in the endeavour to strengthen the weak and rescue the lost. Such an attitude was quite foreign to Hellenism, and gained for the religion of Jesus many adherents from the ranks of the poor and the oppressed. Christianity also proclaimed a new attitude towards the State. While the Hellenistic philosopher professes neutrality towards the community in which he resides, the Christian recognizes the State as an ordinance which is not only human but also divine, and his obligation to discharge the duties of citizenship. Viewing the State

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* p. 158. Far less excusable is the subsequent failure of the Christian Church to give practical effect to what this writer terms “the reconstructive purpose inherent in Christianity”; but with this we are not here concerned.

as the organ through which justice is magisterially administered, he pursues his earthly calling under a glad sense of the security which its protection affords, and by fidelity to the demands of "that calling wherein he was called" approves himself also as a citizen of the kingdom of God (Rom. 13<sup>1 ff.</sup>; 1 Cor. 7<sup>20</sup>).

### *Conclusion.*

From the mass of details supplied by the sources two important facts emerge—the one, that the influence of Hellenism on primitive Christianity is indisputable, and the other, that the extent of this influence is comparatively limited, and the character of it essentially subordinate.<sup>1</sup> The custom of baptism for the dead, for example, referred to in 1 Cor. 15<sup>29</sup>, was of pagan origin; traces of Stoicism in the writings of St. Paul are too obvious to be denied; and there can be as little doubt that the Fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews reflect in various ways the workings of the Hellenistic mind. But while this may be frankly admitted, it would be easy to exaggerate the strength and importance of the Hellenistic element. For even where direct contact and resemblance are found to exist, and coincidences of thought and expression are obvious and striking, either the real content of Christianity is not in question, or else the congruous conceptions are in the two cases based upon different principles, and plainly lead to opposite conclusions. Apparent points of kinship are found upon examination to reveal the unique

<sup>1</sup> See Note 13, p. 389.



depth and originality of Christianity. Nor is this surprising when we consider in what Christianity radically consists, namely, in the historical personality and work of Jesus, and not in any theological interpretation of the same, however exalted—even if built up by an Apostle by means of Hellenistic categories of thought.

Where only external matters are involved, the question of dependence is of no great moment; its real importance has reference only to the borrowing of *ideas*. And in this connexion it may confidently be said that where New Testament ideas appear to have been derived, these “lie mainly on the fringe of Christianity and do not touch its vital essence.”<sup>1</sup> For the rest, while the Christian religion is certainly the fulfilment of the aims of the Old Testament prophets, it is in no sense the fulfilment of the moral and religious ideals of Hellenism. It would be nearer the truth to say that it is a repudiation of these. The conclusion therefore to which we are led is substantially that of Kuenen, who says: “Christian Theology could have made and has made much use of Hellenism. But the Christian religion cannot have sprung from this source.”<sup>2</sup> So far as Hellenism is concerned, it may be boldly affirmed that the fullest recognition of its influence in no way detracts from the essential independence of Christianity. It leaves perfectly valid still the claim made by St. Paul: “If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new” (2 Cor. 5<sup>17</sup>). Through his union with Christ the man is himself a new creature, and looks out upon a

<sup>1</sup> Clemen, *Primitive Christianity and its Non-Jewish Sources*, p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> *Hibbert Lectures*.

new creation. In the new light which has come to him he has learned to put a new estimate upon men and things. While nothing has been destroyed, everything has been transformed. Natural relationships, old affections, human obligations, moral laws—all take on for him a new significance; witness the experience of Augustine, of Bunyan, of multitudes in all the centuries of the Christian era.

A religion inherently possessed of such transforming and creative power cannot properly be associated with the idea of dependence. In whatever aspect it be regarded, Christianity means freshness, originality, new life.<sup>1</sup> It places religion on a new basis—that of the historical facts of the Gospel records concerning the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of “Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” and of personal experience of sonship with God through faith in Christ. It unites morality and religion by an indissoluble tie—a thing which Hellenism had failed to do—not laying the emphasis either upon ceremonial or ecstasy or ethical rules, but preserving the stable equilibrium of faith, hope, and love (I Cor. 13<sup>13</sup>). It makes a new appeal to the world, addressing itself to all who are labouring and burdened (Matt. 11<sup>28</sup>), who hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matt. 5<sup>6</sup>), and truly repent of their sins (Matt. 9<sup>13</sup>, etc.). It makes a new demand upon men—that, namely, for a “reasonable service,” in the double form of a spiritual worship, absolutely free from mythological glamour, absurd superstition, or theurgic art, and of a faithful imitation of the example of Jesus in everything pertaining to the realm of conduct. And, finally, it

<sup>1</sup> See Note 14, p. 391.

opens up a fresh, sublime, and fascinating prospect—that of new heavens and a new earth inhabited by transformed souls destined to be changed from glory to glory. It is idle to speak of a religion such as this being either derived from, or in any vital sense dependent upon, modes of thought or forms of worship prevailing in the contemporary Hellenistic world. The sayings of Jesus bear the stamp of originality. They “overturn and renovate the whole view-point of His contemporaries. They take side with none of the parties or schools. They remake the world. They put an end to the old. They begin the new. From them history and thought take a fresh start. They are the supreme concentration of wisdom expressed in words which a child can understand in part, but of which human thought can never exhaust and fully comprehend the scope.”<sup>1</sup> Unique in character, the religion of Jesus—“the real Light which enlightens every man” (John 1<sup>9</sup>)—occupies a place apart. It cannot be classed as merely one religion among many. Cowper’s lines concerning the Bible :

It gives a light to every age ;  
It gives, but borrows none,

are essentially true of Christianity itself. “The Greeks seek after wisdom,” but to them and to all who share their spirit the message of Christianity is uncompromisingly clear. It postulates the great truth already proclaimed in the name of the Lord by the evangelical prophet to the people of Jerusalem : “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord ; for as the heavens are higher than the

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. M. Ramsay, *The First Christian Century*, p. 101.

earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55<sup>8t.</sup>), thereby stultifying the wisdom of the sages. And having thus ruled mere human philosophy out of court, it presents itself in crystallized form as *the religion of the cross*. This is its peculiarly distinctive character as set forth in the declaration of St. Paul: "Our message is Christ the crucified." Every need of sinful man is met in Him "whom God has made our 'Wisdom,' that is, our righteousness and consecration and redemption." To the Greeks such a gospel was "sheer folly," but to the Apostle, and to all those who have faith, whether Jews or Greeks, it is "the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. I<sup>18 ff.</sup>).

## APPENDIX I.

### NOTES.

NOTE 1. See p. 20.

*Was there a Definite Aim underlying Alexander's  
Campaigns ?*

WHILE admitting that the idea of a world polity dates from the time of Alexander, H. G. Wells (*The Outline of History*, i. p. 239 ff.) attributes to him an apparent want of aim, seen, e.g., in his "wildgoose chase" of Darius; declares "he was not the cause, he was a part of the Hellenization"; and suggests that the union he brought about was nothing more than "a dazzling but transitory flourish of his own magnificent self." This scarcely does justice to the facts. Alexander may not have been much of a statesman, and there were certainly great defects in his composition, notably those of vanity and violence; but is it reasonable to suppose that such achievements as his could have resulted from mere haphazard warfare carried out with no definite aim? It has also to be remembered that owing to his premature death he had no time to effect "a permanent and enduring union." There is more force in the contention of C. A. Fyffe (*History Primers*, p. 121 f.) that in founding cities on the Greek model Alexander's object was not to make the empire Greek, but to keep it in subjection. "That Alexander wished to make the nations of his empire more like a single people is clear . . .; but this is not the same thing as saying that he wished to spread Greek intelligence, art, and literature, over his empire

by means of cities." Several statements in Plutarch's *Life*, however, go to show that behind Alexander's campaign there lay a definite purpose, namely, to conquer the world and to Hellenize it as well. He is spoken of as "*designing* to march against Darius." Further, "when he was master of Egypt, *designing* to settle a colony of Grecians there, he resolved to build a large and populous city, and give it his own name." In Hyrcania "he chose out thirty thousand boys whom he put under masters *to teach them the Greek tongue*, and to train them up to arms in the Macedonian discipline." On his return from his Indian expedition he found them "so improved . . . that he was extremely pleased with them." At the start of this expedition, the burning of the baggage wagons "*redoubled Alexander's zeal and eagerness for his design.*" Upon leaving India he "*erected altars . . . which the kings of Præsians even in our time do honour to when they pass the river (Ganges) and offer sacrifice upon them after the Grecian manner.*" Finally, "when he came to Ecbatana . . . he began to divert himself again with spectacles and public entertainments, to carry on which he had a supply of three thousand actors and artists *newly arrived out of Greece.*"

NOTE 2. See p. 28.

*The Transition from Religious Emotion to Boisterous Hilarity.*

It is interesting to compare with this description of an ancient Attic festival the picture drawn by E. Temple Thurston of a modern Irish celebration in which the religious and hilarious elements are similarly mingled. "It was a dream. . . . It seemed to him to be the day of the patron saint of Rathmore. A day when all the country people for miles around came into the village that they might receive the blessing of the saint by visiting the ruins of his holy well and drinking the blessed water. . . . No matter upon what day of the week the anniversary fell, its most elaborate

celebration was held on the Sunday following, and thither to Rathmore came some hundreds of people walking or driving in high country carts which were unhorsed and put for safety into any yard that was available.

"The little village itself was suddenly overwhelmed by this fluctuating population, and up and down the main street, which was converted into a promenade for the enjoyment of those who had gone their rounds of the sacred ruins on the cliff, the crowd swayed backwards and forwards in noisy hilarity. Here, all the afternoon, the people thronged to and fro in the vulgar gaudiness of inharmonious colours, of the crudity of which the owners themselves were the least conscious. Here were men with battered roulette tables crying out the chances of life. In corners formed by the jutting-out or receding cottages, groups of men would be clustered playing forty-five with cards, the faces of which were black with dirt and greasy with handling.

"A little farther on an acrobat in thick, white, woollen tights would be waiting until he could attract a sufficient number of people to whom it would be lucrative to prove the suppleness of his body. . . . Through the doors of the village hotel and Foley's public-house a stream of men and women would be passing, all in various states of inebriety, jostling each other and shouting with heavy, sodden laughter. And up on the high cliff, overlooking the stretch of the broad bay and the white-crested breast of the wide ocean, the patron saint of Rathmore endeavoured to shut his ears to all this aftermath and listen only to the prayers that would shortly be forgotten in the delights of the village.

"There would be some indeed who took their pleasure first. With wavering steps, heedless of the ghastly blasphemies of the beggar women at the well, swaying from one side to another as they knelt, they would offer up their saturated prayers and drink the blessed water with lips tainted by excess. . . .

"The grossness of living and of pleasure blended itself incongruously with the piety of religious fervour. It is not



a thick boundary line which divides in human nature the spirit of worship from that of debauchery. Religion is a cloak of densest texture, the magicians' robe under which, before the eyes of thousands, can be performed the most wonderful feats of legerdemain that the world has ever seen. And it is when that religion plays violently upon the strings of emotion that the more complete and the more spontaneous is the anti-climax of the mind."

NOTE 3. See p. 43.

*The Supply of Greek Colonists.*

In view of the numerous Hellenistic cities founded at this epoch, Mahaffy asks, "Where were Greek-speaking people found to fill them?" and goes on to remark: "It is indeed true that Greece proper about this time became depopulated, and that it never has recovered from this decay. . . . A great deal of this depopulation was caused by what may be called internal causes, constant wars, pestilence, and the habit among young men of living abroad as mercenaries. Yet even if all this had not been the case, the whole population of Greece would never have sufficed for one tithe of the cities—the great cities—founded all over Asia by the Diadochi. We are therefore driven to the conclusion that but a small fraction, the soldiers and officials of the new cities, were Greeks—Macedonians when founded by Alexander himself—generally broken-down veterans, mutinous and discontented troops, and camp followers. To these were associated people from the surrounding country, it being Alexander's fixed idea to discountenance sporadic country life in villages and encourage town communities. The towns accordingly received considerable privileges, not only territory, but the right of meeting in assembly, of managing their own courts, taxes, etc., subject to certain military and fiscal dues to the Empire. The Greek language and political habits were thus the one bond of union among them, and

the extraordinary colonizing genius of the Greek once more proved itself."—*Alexander's Empire*, p. 93 f.

NOTE 4. See p. 50.

*The Stoic Principle of Living according to Nature.*

We find interesting expression given to this in Dr. Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*. "The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed, which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper, and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may amuse themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove: let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide, and are happy. Let us therefore at length cease to dispute, and learn to live; throw away the encumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, that deviation from nature is deviation from happiness. . . . To live according to nature is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

NOTE 5. See p. 60.

*The Development of Painting.*

"Painting is acknowledged on all hands to have attained its highest bloom just at this period. All the Hellenistic

world was ringing with the praises of Apelles and Protogenes, and men were repeating anecdotes about them as of the great personages of the day. Our familiar *ne sutor supra crepidam* was the remark of Apelles to a cobbler who had rectified his painting of a shoe, but was thereby emboldened to ascend with his strictures to the leg. Protogenes had been for years painting his Ialysos in a suburb of Rhodes when Demetrius came to besiege the town. The Rhodians protested against his burning the suburb which contained such a masterpiece. Demetrius replied he would as soon destroy his father's statues. This was the picture which the jealous Apelles came to see, and was so struck dumb that for a long time he could not recover from his admiration. The greatest of these pictures were now no longer frescoes on the walls, but paintings on portable panels; they were exhibited singly for money, as in New Bond Street nowadays, and even with more ingenious circumstance, for Theon of Samos had painted a famous single figure of an armed warrior rushing to battle, which was covered till a hired trumpeter had blown the alarm that the city was surprised, when the picture was unveiled to the excited spectators. Not only kings and cities, but wealthy private men could acquire and hang these pictures, and we may be sure that lesser artists copied or produced for lesser people what was in fashion among the great. They were strongly individualistic, whether it was the patron who got his own countenance, or his battles, or his hunting perpetuated by art, or the artist who, though he represented something without, thought all the while of the effect he would produce as an artist, and who knew that a work by an author of great name would interest men more than the same—I will not say a superior—work sent forth anonymously. Hence these artists are so jealous of their fame and so envious of rivals, as all the anecdotes show. This strong individualism underlies every development of the age."—Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 108 f.

NOTE 6. See p. 107.

*The Influence of Greek Art in India.*

On this subject Sir John Marshall, K.T., C.I.E., Litt.D., etc., Director-General of Archæology in India, whose judgement must carry weight, writes as follows :

“ The question of the rôle played by classical art in India has been a much disputed one in the past, some authorities maintaining that it was almost a negligible factor, others that it underlay the whole fabric of Indian art. The truth, as so often happens, lies between the two extremes. In Hindustan and in Central India it played an important part in promoting the development of the Early National School, both by clearing its path of technical difficulties and strengthening its growth with new and invigorating ideas. In the north-west region and immediately beyond its frontiers, on the other hand, it long maintained a complete supremacy, obscuring the indigenous traditions and itself producing works of no mean merit, which add appreciably to our understanding of the Hellenistic genius. Here, too, as Indian influence waxed stronger, it eventually culminated in the School of Gandhāra, which left an indelible mark on Buddhist art throughout the Orient. Nevertheless, in spite of its wide diffusion, Hellenistic art never took the real hold upon India that it took, for example, upon Italy or Western Asia, for the reason that the temperaments of the two peoples were radically dissimilar. To the Greek, man, man’s beauty, man’s intellect were everything, and it was the apotheosis of this beauty and this intellect which still remained the keynote of Hellenistic art even in the Orient. But these ideals awakened no response in the Indian mind. The vision of the Indian was bounded by the immortal rather than the mortal, by the infinite rather than the finite. Where Greek thought was ethical, his was spiritual ; where Greek was rational, his was emotional. And to these higher aspirations, these more spiritual instincts, he sought, at a later date, to

give articulate expression by translating them into terms of form and colour. But that was not until the more spacious times of the Guptas, when a closer contact had been established between thought and art, and new impulses imparted to each. 'Prior to the mediæval epoch the Indian had not conceived the bold and, as some think, chimerical idea of thus incarnating spirit in matter. Art to him was a thing apart—a sensuous, concrete expression of the beautiful, which appealed intimately to his subconscious æsthetic sense, but in which neither intellectuality nor mysticism had any share. For the rest, he found in the formative arts a valuable medium in which to narrate, in simple and universal language, the legends and history of his faith; and this was mainly why, for the sake of its lucidity and dramatic power, he welcomed and absorbed the lessons of Hellenistic art, not because he sympathized with its ideals or saw in it the means of giving utterance to his own.'—*A Guide to Taxila*, p. 32 ff.

NOTE 7. See p. 109.

*Is Greek Philosophy traceable to Hindu Sources ?*

It has been suggested that the views of the universe propounded by Buddha (*alias* Gautama, Siddartha, Sakya-muni) were transmitted through his probable contemporary Heraclitus of Ephesus, not, however, to Plato and Aristotle, but to the atomic philosopher Democritus, and that "it was reserved for the Stoics to return to the track marked out by the early philosophers" (Huxley, *Romanes Lecture*, May 1893). So rickety a hypothesis will satisfy no one. In the *Spectator* of January 22, 1921, W. Marsh, arguing for the dependence of the Greek upon the Hindu philosophy, says: "The Greeks were quick-witted and receptive, but their native philosophy was hard-shelled materialism from Thales through Democritus, who did the physics for Epicurus and his 'stye.' The non-materialistic element was supplied at a very early date by a shadowy person called Pythagoras, to whom are ascribed

the characteristic Hindu doctrines of the unreality of matter and phenomena (Máyá) and the reincarnation of souls (Avatar). Through the Eleatics these doctrines infected even physicists like Heraclitus, and Plato himself, the great eclectic, tried to reconcile opposites by an ingenious, though futile, dualism. The Neoplatonists from Plotinus revert more nearly to the so-called Pythagorean doctrines, and urge, ethically, the withdrawal of the self from the world of sense, that the attainment of the real, the union of the individual with the universal soul (Nírvána) may be effected. Iamblichus (A.D. 300) is even by some called a Pythagorean, though the Pythagorean societies had ceased to exist. Finally, the name Pythagoras is the Hellenic form of the Sanskrit Buddha, *guru*, the wise sage, so that the most abiding element in so-called Greek philosophy is not only doctrinally, but also etymologically, Hindu."

All this is interesting, but over-confident. No proof has as yet been forthcoming of the transmission of Indian philosophy to Greece. Plotinus and his disciples lived too late to count, and, besides, the comparison drawn between the unconditioned being of that philosopher and the Buddhist Nírvána is distinctly forced. Nor is it necessary to seek an Indian derivation of the name Pythagoras. Instances occur of other Greek names ending in "-agoras"; that of Aristagoras, *e.g.*, seems to be fairly common, though none of those bearing it can rank as a *guru*. On the whole, we may still conclude with Zeller that there is no warrant for holding that Greek philosophy is traceable to Hindu sources.

NOTE 8. See p. 130.

*The Co-existence of Superstition with Orthodoxy.*

Curiously enough, the same thing is true of the Scottish peasantry of the eighteenth century. They clung both to their superstitions and to orthodox religion. "Each was held with equal tenacity in the same mind, unconscious of



any incongruity. Trust in charms, omens, incantations were rife amongst them all. . . . Old pagan beliefs lay side by side in peasant minds with those of Calvin. Beyond the Tay they had their Beltane fires—when on the first of May (Old Style) they lit the fire of turf, danced round the flames, and spilt a libation of candle on the ground ; they took their oat cake, having on it quaint nobs, which they flung in turn over their shoulder, saying, ‘ This to thee, protect my cattle,’ ‘ This to thee, O fox, spare my sheep,’ ‘ This to thee, O eagle ; this to thee, O hooded crow, save my lambs.’ Next day, probably, these idolaters were sitting in their pews in orthodox most demure.”—Graham, *Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 191 f.

NOTE 9. See p. 178.

*The Question of Oriental and other Influences on Philo's Teaching.*

It has been held, though with insufficient reason, that Philo's teaching owes as much to Oriental mysticism as to Greek philosophy—so, *e.g.*, Delaunay, influenced by his opinion that Philo is a Pantheist. Philo's conception of emanations from the divine Essence as the original Light has, however, much in common with the Ameshaspentas and Izeds of the Zend-Avesta. Herriot, on the other hand, asserts that all the ideas of Philo are intelligible without reference to Persian or Indian mysticism. The truth appears to be that where his writings show traces of Oriental culture these affect not his philosophical, but his religious views. Although Philo's severe criticism of Egyptian superstitions might seem to preclude the possibility of influence from that quarter, Siegfried finds in his doctrine of the hidden being of God and the active and visible (*erscheinenden*) powers proceeding from this a reminiscence of the Egyptian myth of Ammon (the hidden) and Hori (the visible gods).



NOTE 10. See p. 206.

*The Logos of Philo and the Logos of St. John.*

According to Siegfried, the evidence that the Johannine doctrine of the Logos was taken over from Philo is as follows : —(1) The term Logos, as the name for God manifest, is borrowed from Philo. (2) When it is asserted that “ the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” this is evidently a repetition of Philo’s distinction between God (ὁ θεός) and His eldest Logos (θεός). (3) Common to both is the idea of an independent essence, in which the Logos is differentiated from God. (4) Philo’s characteristic expression δι’ αὐτοῦ is also adopted to indicate the mediating activity of the Logos in creation. (5) Both writers view the Logos as a Power specially enlightening the world of men. Philo calls Him “ the sunbeam ” (ἡ ἀνθρήλιος ἀγγή), while we have in John the designation “ the light of men.” According to Harnack, on the other hand, “ the conception of God’s relation to the world as given in the Fourth Gospel is not Philonic. The Logos doctrine is therefore essentially not that of Philo ” (*Hist. of Dogma*, Eng. tr., i. p. 114 n.). This is also the view taken by Zöckler, who says : “ The logos of Philo is a cosmic, naturalistic power, without real personality, borrowed from the Greek philosophy ; while the logos of John is an ethical personality in the highest sense of the word—the realization of the Messianic idea of the Old Testament ” (article “ Philo ” in the *Schaff-Hertzog Encyc.*).

NOTE 11. See p. 287.

*Paul’s Relations with Hellenism.*

The question of Paul’s relations with Hellenism is still keenly debated. According to Sabatier, there is nothing to show that he was familiar with Greek culture ; according to Pfleiderer, he was at least indirectly acquainted with Greek thought through Alexandrian Judaism. The truth appears

to be that while his standpoint is essentially Jewish, the Hellenistic factor in his thinking cannot be ignored. "On the whole, it is reasonable to assume that Paul's Greek environment at Tarsus, and on his missionary journeys at a later period, had familiarized him with the modes of thought common in the schools, both through his intercourse with educated men and through the natural tendency on the part of the dominant scientific and philosophic ideas of any age to find their way sooner or later into the common stock of notions of the man in the street" (Prof. E. J. Price on "Paul and Plato" in the *Hibbert Journal* for January 1918). Johannes Weiss points out that "his vocabulary contains a large number of ideas entirely Greek, and only explicable as the product of Greek culture, which are never used by Jesus. Such terms as πνευματικός, ψυχικός, σαρκικός point to profound anthropological and psychological thought; a theory of religious perception is presupposed by the phrase νοούμενα καθορᾶται in Rom. 1<sup>20</sup> (The invisible things of God are clearly seen (καθορᾶται), being perceived (νοούμενα) through the things that are made). The use of νοῦς, Rom. 7<sup>23, 25</sup> (I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my *mind*. . . . So then I myself with the *mind* obey the law of God), and in particular the concept of conscience (συνειδήσις), Rom. 2<sup>15</sup> *et al.*, presupposes accurate consideration of psychological questions. In 1 Cor. 11<sup>14</sup> Paul appeals to φύσις (Doth not nature itself teach you?). In 1 Cor. 7<sup>35</sup> he uses the word ἀπερισπάστως ('without distraction'), used often by Epictetus. He speaks of θεϊότης and θεότης, and makes ἀφθαρσία (incorruption), αἶδιον (eternal), and δόρατον (invisible) the characteristic signs of the idea of God; he uses such delicate distinctions as μορφή (form-essential qualities) and σχῆμα (fashion-mathematical qualities or shape), μεταμορφοῦσθαι (transform) and μετασχηματίζεσθαι (fashion)." Cf. Phil. 2<sup>6-8</sup>; Rom. 12<sup>2</sup>; 2 Cor. 3<sup>18</sup>, 11<sup>13 ff.</sup>; also 1 Cor. 4<sup>6</sup>; Rom. 2<sup>20</sup>.

NOTE 12. See p. 305.

*The Classification of Gnostic Sects.*

It is very difficult to arrive at a satisfactory classification of Gnostic sects. Among the many suggested the following, perhaps, are the best :—Neander's division into Judaizing and anti-Judaistic ; Gieseler's into Alexandrian and Syrian (although admittedly the Syrian Marcion does not fit into this grouping) ; Baur's into (1) such as combine Christianity with Judaism and Paganism (Basilides, Valentinus, the Ophites) ; (2) such as oppose Christianity to both (Marcion) ; (3) such as, identifying Judaism and Christianity, oppose them to Paganism (Clementine Homilies) ; and that of Jacobi, which, based on historic development, differentiates (1) the period of sporadic Gnosticism at the close of the first century ; (2) the period of greatest fertility of speculation till the middle of the third ; (3) the period of decay in which there is little of original thought (after the fifth century there are no new systems) ; (4) the revival of Gnostic ideas about the seventh century in the sect of the Cathari. Of these only the first two classes come within our purview.

NOTE 13. See p. 372.

*The Verdict of Clemen.*

In summing up the results of his inquiry regarding "the dependence of primitive Christianity upon non-Jewish religious and philosophical systems," Clemen (*op. cit.* p. 366 ff.) says : "First of all, an indirect or direct influence of these on the preaching of Jesus and the ideas of the Synoptists is discernible merely in certain expressions, metaphors, and comparisons (Matt. 5<sup>48</sup>, 7<sup>13 f.</sup>, 16, Mark 2<sup>17</sup> and par. ; Luke 4<sup>23</sup>) : the subject-matter as a whole is very little affected." Then concerning the *Greek* influence he goes on to remark : "On the other hand, the Areopagus discourse in Acts 17<sup>24 ff.</sup> is even in its matter partially dependent upon Greek popular

philosophy, especially upon Stoicism ; and Paul himself is similarly dependent in his corresponding views. In Paul's doctrine of freedom it is, I think, only the expression, not the thought, that is borrowed ; but his dictum regarding the equality of the sexes (Gal. 3<sup>28</sup> ; Col. 3<sup>11</sup>) is in part derived from foreign, and there again Stoic, influences, all the more probably as Paul has not worked out the full consequences of the principle. Again, the doctrine that the flesh is the source of sin has partially the same origin ; so, too, the classification of certain sins in the so-called catalogue of vices—a classification, however, which again is only an affair of externals. Further, the so-called ' parties ' in the Corinthian Church, and the importance they attached to literary style and profound wisdom, are to be traced to heathen influences. Even Paul himself might be partially indebted to Stoicism in his judgement regarding the ' natural ' and the ' spiritual ' man (1 Cor. 2<sup>14</sup> <sup>1</sup>) ; in the comparison of man with the temple of God (3<sup>16</sup>) ; in the dictum, ' *All things are yours* ' (ver. 21) ; in the description of himself in 4<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> ; in his statement and illustration of the principle, ' *Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called* ' (7<sup>17</sup> <sup>2</sup>) ; even in the warning that one should not through his knowledge make his weak brother perish (8<sup>11</sup>). There is no doubt that his appeal to nature (11<sup>14</sup>) comes ultimately from the same source ; and the comparison of a society with the body (12<sup>12</sup> <sup>2</sup> ; Rom. 12<sup>4</sup> <sup>2</sup>), as well as the comparison of the body with a vessel or a tent (2 Cor. 4<sup>7</sup>, 5<sup>1</sup>), was also a particular favourite with the Stoics. But if in these cases we have only to do with comparisons, Paul's further debts to philosophy in this chapter (2 Cor. 5) involve the substance of his teaching as well : for he teaches that the body weighs us down and that the soul might be freed from it even now in visions (12<sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup>). This is at the same time the *clearest* instance of Paul's indebtedness to Greek philosophy : otherwise, I think, it has exercised only a joint and partial influence upon him. Thus, for example, when in Rom. 9 he explains the unbelief of Israel deterministically, when he

justifies the wrath of God as a means of revealing His glory, and in chap. 11, when he anticipates the ultimate conversion of Israel. Even the vegetarianism that is spoken of in chap. 14 f. might be in some degree of non-Jewish origin ; and lastly, Paul himself in Phil. 4<sup>8</sup>, with full consciousness, I believe, includes natural morality in Christian morality.

"The Epistle to the Hebrews, the Johannine literature in its doctrine of the Logos, the Epistle to the Ephesians in its belief in a world of ideas, go back to Greek philosophy : otherwise the rest of the post-Pauline writings are influenced by it only in phraseology and in their figurative language."

NOTE 14. See p. 374.

*The New World opened by Christianity.*

The effect produced upon a bright, youthful Greek mind by the perusal of the Gospel narrative is impressively described in Newman's story of *Callista*, p. 286 ff. "It was simply a gift from an unseen world. It opened a view of a new state and community of beings, which only seemed too beautiful to be possible. But not into a new state of things alone, but into the presence of One who was simply distinct and removed from anything that she had, in her most imaginative moments, ever depicted to her mind as ideal perfection. Here was that to which her intellect tended, though that intellect could not frame it. It could approve and acknowledge when set before it what it could not originate. Here was He who spoke to her in her conscience ; whose Voice she heard, whose Person she was seeking for. . . .

"O what a new world of thought she had entered ! It occupied her mind from its very novelty. Everything looked dull and dim by the side of it ; her brother had ever been dinning into her ears that maxim of the heathen, 'Enjoy the present, trust nothing to the future.' She indeed could not enjoy the present with that relish which he wished, and she had not any trust in the future either ; but this

volume spoke a different doctrine. There she learned the very opposite to what Aristo taught, viz. that the present must be sacrificed for the future ; that what is seen must give way to what is believed. Nay more, she drank in the teaching which at first seemed so paradoxical, that even present happiness and present greatness lie in relinquishing what at first sight seems to promise them ; that the way to true pleasure is not through self-indulgence, but through mortification ; that the way to power is weakness, the way to success failure, the way to wisdom foolishness, the way to glory dishonour. She saw that there was a higher beauty than that which the order and harmony of the natural world revealed, and a deeper peace and calm than that which the exercise whether of the intellect or of the purest human affection can supply. She now began to understand that strange unearthly composure, which had struck her in Chione, Agellius, and Cæcilius ; she understood that they were detached from earth, not merely because they had not the possession, nor the natural love of its gifts, but because they possessed a higher blessing already, which they loved above everything else. Thus, by degrees, Callista came to walk by a new philosophy ; and had ideas, and principles, and recognized relations and aims, and felt the force of arguments, to which before she was an utter stranger. Life and death, action and suffering, fortunes and abilities, all had now a new meaning and application. As the skies speak differently to the philosopher and the peasant, as a book of poems to the imaginative and the cold and narrow intellect, so now she saw her being, her history, her present condition, her future, in a new light, which no one else could share with her. But the ruling sovereign thought of the whole was He who exemplified all this wonderful philosophy in Himself."



## APPENDIX II.

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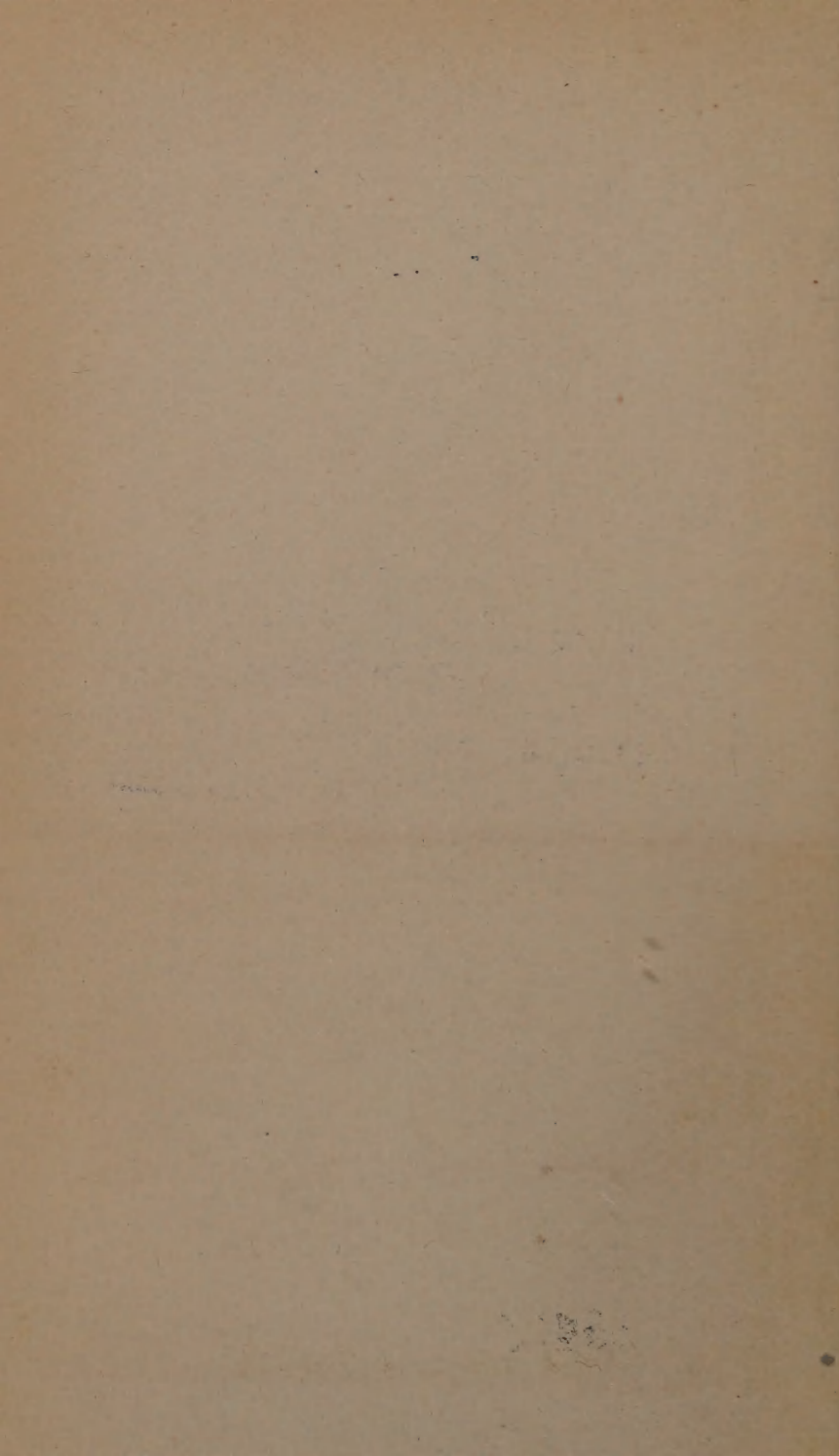
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